MURFREESBORO 2035

Our Future Begins Now

Introduction

City parks are dynamic institutions that play a vital though not fully appreciated or understood role in the social, economic, and physical well-being of America's cities and residents.

Parks were, for a long time, thought of simply as places for recreation, preservation of open space and social gatherings. As cities across the country find that populations are being attracted back into more urbanized areas, revitalized park systems and recreation facilities are becoming central themes of this urban renaissance. The role of parks in cities and urban metropolitan areas has become much greater as the scope and impact of parks increasingly influences quality of life, economic development, health, and many other aspects of urban life.

There is also a need to better plan for how parks and public spaces fit into a city's overall plan. As cities work on solutions in terms of economic development, health and the provisions of infrastructure, collaboration is a critical component going forward. If city leaders work together, parks - and public space as a whole - can be agents of positive change. Agencies can work across departmental boundaries in order to share capital and other resources, so as to achieve more holistic goals.

GAME CHANGER:

"We should invest in conserving greenspace with more parks and protected natural areas, commit to better educational opportunities, celebrate diversity through public art."

Examples of cities throughout the country that are also achieving similar themes within their park systems are numerous. Among the examples:

- Atlanta is in the midst of a $3 billion project that will provide a network of public parks, multi-use trails and transit along a 22-mile railroad corridor. The Beltline is the most comprehensive transportation and economic development project ever undertaken in Georgia's capitol and shows how enhancements in the public realm can span all sectors to increase public wellbeing and monetary gain.
- The Chicago Park District is embarking on an economic analysis to determine what the park district means for the City. Concrete numbers will be used to recognize parks as an economic driver.
- Los Angeles is creating 50 new parks in five years to forever change its park footprint and improve access for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Cleveland Metroparks is using nature centers to teach community members how to develop windowsill gardening. They are also converting 20,000 vacant lots from foreclosures into community gardens, and vineyards, including a six-acre farm operated by refugees.
- Philadelphia's Green City, Clean Waters plan is ground-breaking in that it relies on green infrastructure to deal with its combined sewer overflow problems as opposed to traditional gray infrastructure.

Issues and Challenges

The network of parks and trails, natural and cultural resources and amenities that compose Murfreesboro's parks and recreation program, while impressive, must continue to grow in order to accommodate the anticipated programmatic needs associated with an increasingly diverse and rapidly expanding population. Indeed, while there are multiple opportunities through which to add breadth and depth to its parks system, significant challenges must be overcome.

1. The City's parks and recreation program is enjoyed by the citizens of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County alike; yet the responsibility of programming and coordinating events and activities, funding, operations and management is primarily borne by the City's Parks and Recreation Department. How can the costs of parks be more equitably shared among multiple constituencies? New administrative and managerial vehicles and interlocal agreements must be developed and executed to support the City's and County's parks and recreational programs into the future.
2. Murfreesboro currently enjoys the environmental resources that have galvanized the City's identity, and enabled it to remain a freestanding community; including its rolling hills, streams and lakes, lush hardwood forests and abundant agricultural fields. Yet population growth and development is rapidly consuming the very resources that contribute to its unique character. As discussed in Chapter 2, *Growth Capacity and Infrastructure*, to preserve its unique natural and cultural heritage, the City must balance greenfield development with infill and redevelopment of marginal properties within the City.
3. The development of the City's Greenways program is a shining example of the progressive, forward thinking of its elected and appointed officials. Despite the fact that the greenways are used by hundreds of people each day, and that national studies quantify the huge economic impact greenways and recreational trails have on a community, it's development has not been appreciated by all. How can the City be more effective in communicating the positive benefits of its open space and recreational facilities so as to instill greater public support?

The Value of Development in Proximity to Parks

$2,262: Estimated sales price premium for homes located near parks.

$4 Billion: Amount of private investment and development spurred by New York City's High Line Project.

103%: Increase in value for properties within a five-minute walk of the High Line from 2003 (before construction) to 2011.

68%: Percentage of U.S. millennials (ages 18-34) who cite proximity to parks as an important community characteristic.

Source: Active Living Research: New York Times/City of New York City; New York City Economic Development Corporation; Urban Land Institute.

Cities are discovering that their public parks are more than just expensive lawns to maintain. They are the seeding grounds for their neighborhoods and the places where people come together to help each other.

- Project for Public Spaces

4. Based on National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards, there is currently a 168 acre deficit in neighborhood parks within the City limits. By 2035 the demand for neighborhood parks will increase by 174 acres, as well as an additional 200 acres required for regional parks; making the total requirement (supply) to exceed 500 additional acres of parkland to meet the demand. Where will the land come from to accommodate this need?

There are several national trends that need to be acknowledged as the City plans for its parks, programs its recreational activities, and promotes its cultural and arts-related events.

5. Increasingly, people suffer from a lack of free time. This is a significant barrier to participation in recreation and cultural activities throughout the United States, which affects both youth and adults. A general lack of time prevents a significant percentage of citizens from participating in recreation and cultural activities as often as they would like. The Murfreesboro Parks Department acknowledges the need for longer operating hours and flexibility in scheduling in order to accommodate people's busy schedules.
6. More people are physically inactive. The result is higher levels of obesity, particularly among youth, and chronic disease such as diabetes, heart conditions, etc. Reliance on automobiles has created a culture of driving to destinations as opposed to encouraging active forms of transportation such walking or cycling. The popularity of video games, Internet and television are out-competing physical activities. Through its Wellness, Outdoor,

[Continued on page 6.4]

The Power of Parks and Trails

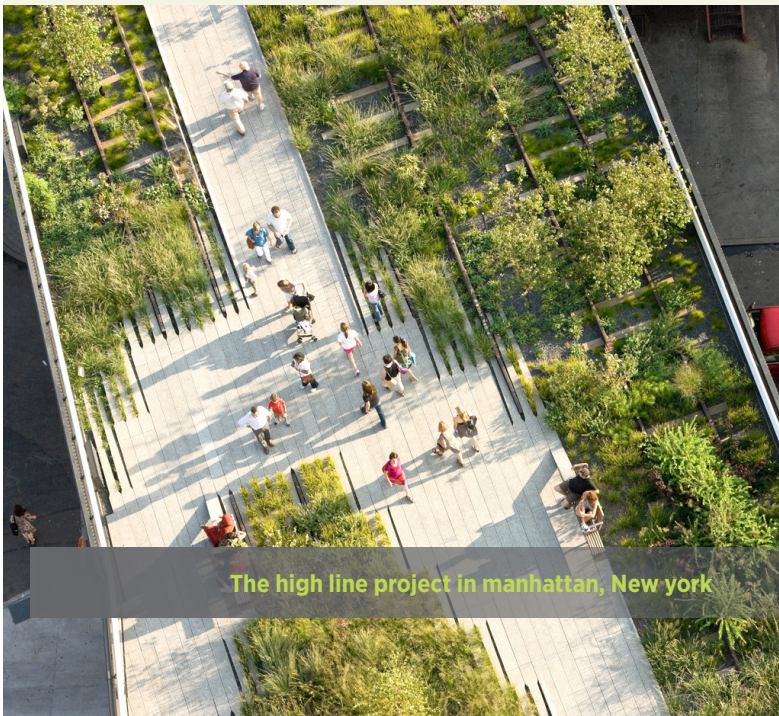
Designing places for active living aims to get people moving so as to improve health and well-being. Exercise has been shown to relieve stress, anxiety, and mild depression. Research shows that living near parks and recreation facilities leads to higher levels of physical activity. Communities designed for active living feature public places such as greenways, multi-use trails, playgrounds, pools, athletic fields, and other recreation facilities that encourage physical exercise.

Programming these public spaces with activities such as family "fun runs," healthy living festivals, and free yoga classes can support a culture of healthy, active living. Dozens of studies show that parks spur economic development by attracting home-buyers and boosting residential property values.

The High Line Project, the 20-block-long park constructed on a former elevated freight rail line in Manhattan, brought over 3.7 million visitors to the city in 2011. A study by the New York City Economic Development Corporation showed that property values near the park increased 103 percent between 2003 and 2011.

The award-winning Milwaukee Riverwalk reinvigorated a moribund two-mile river corridor in the heart of Milwaukee's business district with new plazas, parks, walkways, and public art. As of 2002, the $12 million in private investment in new restaurants, cafes, shops, offices, and boating facilities along the cleaned-up river and has drawn 3,500 new downtown residents to riverfront condominiums redeveloped from warehouses.

Source: ULI - Intersections: Health and the Built Environment



The high line project in manhattan, New york

and Athletic Divisions, the Parks and Recreation Department is constantly adding and revising programs and opportunities to address obesity. Some of the larger initiatives include Downtown in Motion, Better Boro Project, and healthy snack options at park concession stands,

7. Recent studies indicate a range of emerging parks and recreation activities - including a growing demand for spontaneous, non-programmed recreation and cultural activities - where people can drop-in at their own convenience and take part in a pick-up game of some sort (responds to lack of time). Additionally, there is increasing interest in field sports beyond football and soccer, such as Ultimate Frisbee, disc golf, rugby, etc. Non-traditional sports such as skateboarding, sand volleyball, cricket, etc. are also gaining in popularity. Demands for passive recreation and cultural activities in parks, such as walking, bird-watching, picnicking, etc., are also increasing.

Themes and Guiding Principles

Three important themes weave throughout this chapter, including the use of parks as:

- Economic development strategies;
- Spaces to improve citizen's health outcomes; and
- Green infrastructure and ecosystem services to improve stormwater management and provide environmental benefits.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Guiding Principle 1:** Provide, maintain, and enhance recreational opportunities through high-quality parks, facilities and open spaces.
- **Guiding Principle 2:** Ensure the long-term sustainability of parklands and park resources.
- **Guiding Principle 3:** Provide recreational services that facilitate quality experiences and learning opportunities for individuals throughout the community.
- **Guiding Principle 4:** Expand and nourish productive relationships with community partners.
- **Guiding Principle 5:** Maintain and strengthen a strong internal organizational structure within the Parks and Recreation Department.
- **Guiding Principle 6:** Cultivate the growth of cultural and artistic expression and appreciation in Murfreesboro. Encourage the use of public arts through public and private investment to enhance both existing and new developments.
- **Guiding Principle 7:** Create greater opportunities for Murfreesboro to capitalize on the recreational resources of the City and County through tourism- and recreational-based businesses.
- **Guiding Principle 8:** Encourage healthy and active lifestyles that promote physical and mental wellness, along with social growth.

The Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department currently follows and practices all eight of these principles.

MURFREESBORO PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Murfreesboro's Parks and Recreation Department manages approximately 1,110 acres of parkland within the City. To date, the Department has been successful in implementing its mission, which is to plan, organize, implement, and promote a comprehensive delivery system of programs, facilities, and areas which enhance the community's quality of life.

In light of the previously mentioned issues and challenges the Parks and Recreation Department should continue to utilize a delivery framework that is innovative, effective and customer-focused. This will position the Parks and Recreation Department favorably in terms of continued success. As such, the Department's management systems should continue to emphasize several key concepts, such as:

- **Team-based Approaches** – staff throughout the Parks and Recreation Department should be trained to collaborate and support each other, as necessary, in fulfillment of the Departmental vision and operating philosophy.

We manage approximately 1,100 acres of park land with over $150 million in assets. This includes maintenance and preservation of wetlands, rivers, forest, wildlife, plants, buildings, and equipment.

- Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department: Strategic Action Plan 2010-2015

- **Creativity** – with a dynamic operating environment, it will be up to the Parks and Recreation Department Department to innovate, create, adapt and respond to the needs for new types of services, facilities and programs.
- **Adaptability** – to be effective, delivery systems need to be flexible and adaptable to a changing market; as well as new priorities set out by the City Council, Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission, which means that the Department will always have to be up to date on best practices and regularly engaging its public to truly understand what is required, and how best to deliver.
- **Accountability Through Empowerment** – establishing basic guidelines and ground rules that define operational parameters within the Department, and encouraging staff to make decisions and take actions, with the knowledge that they will be accountable for their performance.
- **Financial Sustainability** – Staff with responsibilities and control over revenue and cost aspects of the City's parks program should understand their level of accountability and the implications of falling short, reaching or exceeding business plan estimates.

Park Types and Acreage Standards

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a national, non-profit service organization dedicated to advancing parks, recreation and environmental

[Continued on page 6.6]

National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Three Pillars

IMPACTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH:

CONSERVATION

The conservation pillar is aimed at protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and engaging communities in conservation practices. As such, core to the mission of public parks and recreation is the preservation of natural resources and the promotion of good conservation and stewardship practices.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

America continues to feel the strain of a serious health crisis affecting adults and young alike. One in which citizens are plagued by poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles, and unhealthy living habits. The scientific evidence is mounting that parks and opportunities for recreation engender healthier communities; and top health officials in the country confirm that parks and recreation are a critical solution for our nation's health epidemic.

SOCIAL EQUITY

The social equity pillar is focused on ensuring all people have access to the benefits of local parks and recreation. True to the very philosophy of public parks and recreation is the idea that all people, no matter the color of their skin, age, income level or ability - have access to programs, facilities, places and spaces that make their lives and communities great.

TABLE 6.1, NRPA PARKLAND CLASSIFICATION STANDARDS

Type	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres per 1,000 Residents	Desirable Site Characteristics and Facilities
Neighborhood Parks	1/4 - 1/2 mile	5 - 15 acres	1 - 2 acres	Serve the surrounding neighborhoods with open space and facilities such as basketball courts, children's play equipment and picnic tables.
Community Parks	1 -2 miles	25+ acres	5 - 8 acres	May include areas suited for intense recreation facilities such as athletic complexes and large swimming pools; easily accessible to nearby neighborhoods and other neighborhoods.
Regional Parks	Several communities	200+ acres	5 - 10 acres	Contiguous with or encompassing natural resources.
Special Use Areas	No applicable standards	Variable depending on use	Variable	Area for specialized or single purpose recreation activities such as campgrounds, golf courses, etc.

Source: National Recreation and Parks Association. "Why Parks and Recreation are Essential Public Services."

efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people. NRPA has created a hierarchy of park types, as well as a set of acreage standards for different park types. This information is shown in Table 6.1, *NRPA Parkland Classification Standards*.

EXISTING PARK INVENTORY

Currently, the City of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department manages 17 different park facilities; these facilities encompass a collection of active and passive recreation centers, including sports complexes, a wilderness center, community centers, wetlands, and historic resources such as Cannonsburgh Village. These facilities have a combined acreage of roughly 1,110 acres. The list of the existing park facilities managed by the Parks and Recreation Department can be referenced in Table 6.2, *Existing Parks and Recreation Inventory*.

Park acreage that is not managed by the Parks and Recreation Department, such as the Murfreesboro City Schools campuses and the Stones River National Battlefield are also listed in Table 6.2 due to their significant contribution to park capacity within the City.

PARK SERVICE AREAS

The current park service areas for the existing parks within the City can be referenced in Figure 6.1, *Park Service Areas*. The majority of the City's park facilities are located within the central and northeast portions of Murfreesboro, with the southern portion of the City being serviced primarily by Barfield Crescent Park and Wilderness Center. Currently, West Murfreesboro lacks significant parkland. If not for the Rutherford County School District schools within the City limits and Urban Growth Boundary, and Murfreesboro City Schools campuses, there would be little parkland capacity. Therefore, West Murfreesboro represents the highest need for parkland within the City. Both neighborhood and community parks are needed in this area to adequately service the demand and to deliver the highest quality of life to West Murfreesboro residents.

[Continued on page 6.9]

A HEALTHY MURFREESBORO:

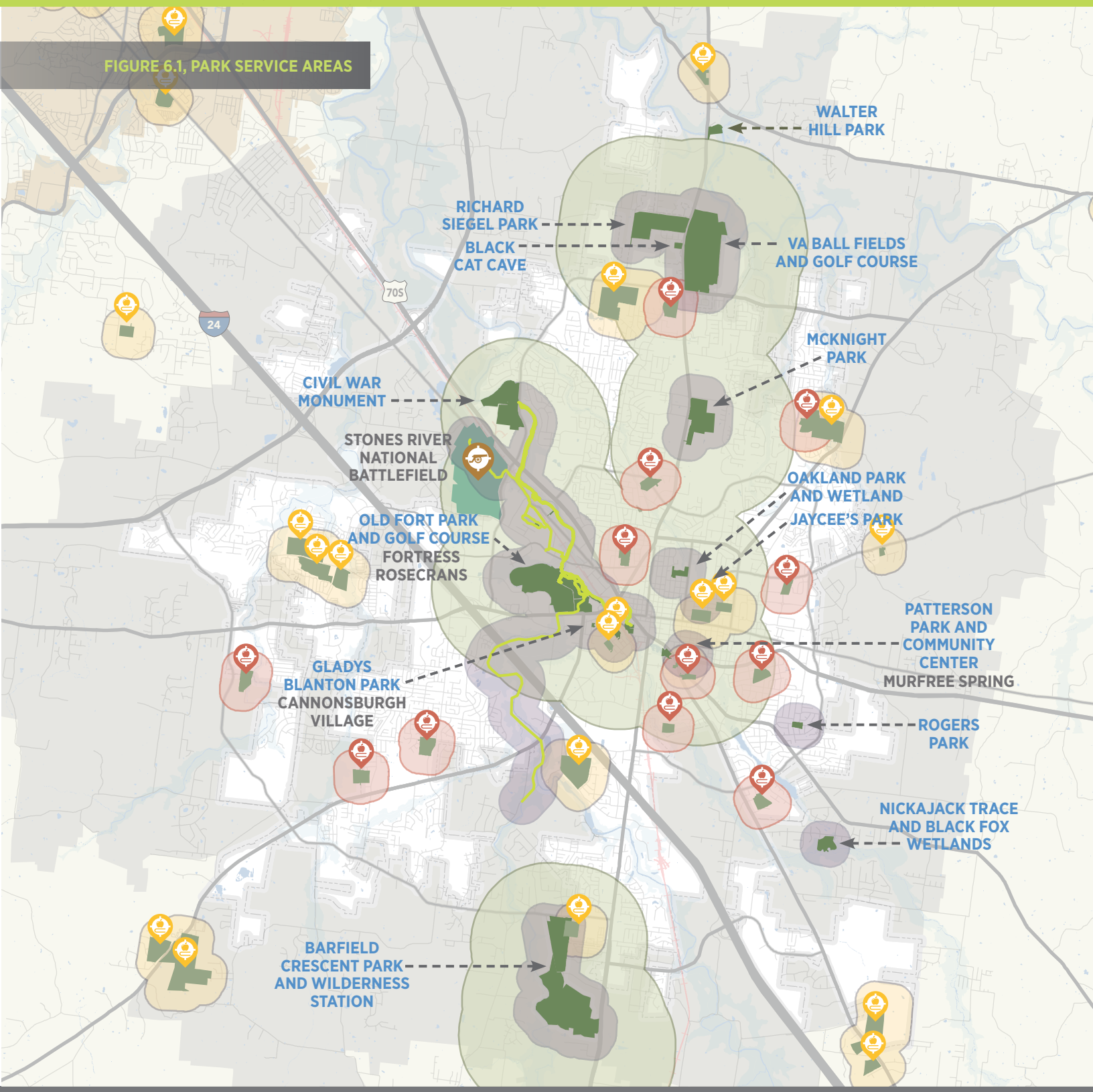
Murfreesboro has a wonderful park system, greenway trails and events, farmers markets and affordable rec centers. I believe it is educating people about all these great resources available to them that most counties do not offer. Murfreesboro is unique in this respect.

Source: CityProject

TABLE 6.2, EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION INVENTORY

Inventory	Type	Acreage	Usage Type			
			Active	Passive	Conservation	Open Space
Facilities Managed by Parks and Recreation Department						
Barfield Crescent Park and Wilderness Station	Regional	430	■	■	■	■
Bark Park	Special Use	1	■			
Cannonsburgh Village	Special Use	6	■	■		
Gateway Island and Trails	Special Use	1	■	■		■
Gladys Blanton Park	Neighborhood	1.4	■	■		■
Jaycee's Park	Neighborhood	1		■		■
McFadden Community Center	Community	3	■	■		■
Murfree Spring Wetlands	Special Use	25	■	■	■	■
Nickajack Trace and Black Fox Wetlands	Special	58	■	■	■	■
Oaklands Park	Community	31	■	■	■	■
Old Fort Park	Community	50	■	■	■	■
Patterson Park Community Center and Park	Community	10	■	■	■	■
Rodgers Park	Neighborhood	7.5	■	■	■	■
Richard Siegel Soccer Complex and Neighborhood Park	Community	132	■	■	■	■
McKnight Park and Sports*Com	Community	81	■	■	■	■
Walter Hill Park	Special Use	16	■	■	■	■
Murfreesboro Greenway System (and trailheads)	Linear Park and Greenway	-	■	■	■	■
Facility Managed by National Park Service						
Stones River National Battlefield	Special Use	132	■	■	■	■
Murfreesboro City Schools-Parks Partnership Campuses						
Erma Siegel Elementary	Currently in Use by Murfreesboro City Schools	29 (15)	■	■	■	■
Mitchell Neilson Elementary		23 (12)	■	■	■	■
Discovery School at Bellwood		12 (6)	■	■	■	■
Black Fox Elementary		20 (10)	■	■	■	■
Cason Lane Elementary		29 (15)	■	■	■	■
Overall Creek Elementary		25 (12)	■	■	■	■
Facility Managed by VA Hospital						
VA Hospital Ballfields	Community	316	■			

FIGURE 6.1, PARK SERVICE AREAS



MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS (MCS)

RUTHERFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS (RCS)

*Although functionally classified as a linear greenway, the Murfreesboro Greenway Trails serve the community in a similar fashion as a neighborhood and community park.

MCS PLAYGROUND SERVICE AREA (0.25 MILE)

RCSD PLAYGROUND SERVICE AREA (0.25 MILE)

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK SERVICE AREA (0.25 MILE)

COMMUNITY PARK SERVICE AREA (1 MILE)*

EXISTING GREENWAY

Role of School Properties in Parks and Recreation Inventory

Schools make a substantial difference in meeting the community's parks and recreation needs. As shown in Figure 6.1, *Park Service Areas*, school sites have the same service area as neighborhood parks. It should be noted that these facilities are owned and managed by the City Schools District and are not entirely open at all hours to the public. While school properties contribute to the parks and recreation inventory, they do not entirely fulfill the demands placed on the City's facilities, with respect to access, usage and programming. Having said that, however, the school sites play an integral role in the City's park system by supplying needed park and recreation capacity throughout the planning area. Collectively, Rutherford County Schools equates to approximately 400 acres of land; while, Murfreesboro City Schools could contribute up to roughly 100 acres to the City's park capacity.

MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS AND PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT PARTNERSHIP

Over the years the Parks and Recreation Department has partnered with Murfreesboro City Schools and signed joint use agreements on a variety of programs, events and the shared use of facilities. In 2014, Murfreesboro's Parks and Recreation Department coordinated a verbal use agreement with several Murfreesboro City School campuses to provide the public use of school recreational grounds after the school is closed.

Joint facility use agreements can:

- Facilitate cost-sharing for maintenance of recreational facilities;
- Provide increased resources for physical activities and education for children;
- Increase access to nearby places to allow community members to be more physical active;
- Promote partnerships across community agencies; and
- Create a sense of community ownership and engagement.

Allowing access to school physical activity spaces and facilities is a recommended strategy in the Healthy People 2020 goals for the nation's health. By working together to share facilities, schools and communities can achieve multiple benefits.

Taking into account the City Schools sites affects the ability of existing parks to meet the community's programmatic needs. Joint use of school property for additional park facility development provides an opportunity to align resources so that Murfreesboro City Schools and the Parks and Recreation Department work together to meet the needs of the entire community. This is particularly relevant where schools present opportunities for areas that are not otherwise well-served. Through this agreement, individuals and families may have increased access to playgrounds, basketball courts and walking trails. Community organizations can gain access to fields and gymnasiums to practice and compete, and schools may share some of the costs associated with increased use by charging rental fees. Furthermore, participating in physical activity in safe and clean public spaces helps everyone to feel more connected to their community.

[Continued on page 6.11]

Joint Use Agreements

WHAT ARE JOINT USE AGREEMENTS?

A joint use agreement is a "formal agreement between two separate government entities - often a school and a city or county - setting forth the terms and conditions for shared use of public property or facilities."[1] For example, city governments can contract with local school districts to allow community members to use playgrounds and fields when school is not in session.

- Most school districts have a joint use agreement addressing recreational use of school facilities; and
- Community advocates can help school districts develop stronger joint use agreements by indicating which recreational facilities are eligible for use, by whom and when. The agreements should also address liability and repair responsibilities.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JOINT USE AGREEMENTS?

- Facilitate cost-sharing for maintenance of school grounds and buildings;
- Provide increased resources for physical education and physical activity throughout the day for school children;
- Improve access to places to be physically active for families and individual community members;
- Promote partnerships across community agencies that may influence other opportunities to work together; and,
- Create a sense of community ownership and engagement.

1 National Policy and Legal Analysis Network (NPLAN). "Model Joint Use Agreement Resources: Increasing physical activity by opening up school grounds:" 2011.

Source: BTG Research Brief - Joint Use Agreements: Creating Opportunities for Physical Activity.

Tennessee Recreational Joint Facility Use Agreement Toolkit[1]

Objective: To pursue Joint Use Agreements that provide communities with access to school playgrounds, park land, school classrooms, gyms, ball fields and community centers.

Strategy: To promote the development of joint facility use agreements between schools and local government (parks and recreation agencies) to allow school facilities (gym, track, baseball fields, soccer fields, etc.) to be used for recreation by neighborhood organizations and/or residents.

The Tennessee Recreational Joint Facility Use ToolKit has been prepared by the Tennessee Recreation & Parks Association in response to the obesity epidemic consuming the State of Tennessee. The Toolkit is associated with *Eat Well, Play More Tennessee* and Tennessee's statewide nutrition and physical activity plan to reduce obesity and chronic disease in Tennessee by 2015. The toolkit serves as a research and information source for professionals on how to establish and enter-in to a joint facility use agreement so both parties are protected and informed. School administrators and the public need to be educated and well-informed on the standards of facilities and the laws and policies that are correlated with this subject.

Potential targets of a joint facility use agreement include, but are not limited to:

- Gymnasiums;
- Playgrounds;
- Community kitchens;
- Fields;
- Courts;
- Tracks;
- Walking trails;
- Facilities owned by religious congregations;
- Parks;
- Art or performance spaces; and,
- Community centers.

1 *http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/trpa.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/JFU_Toolkit/JFU_Toolkit_printing_version.pdf*

TYPES OF JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

- **Model 1:** *Opening Outdoor School Facilities for Use During Non-School Hours* is the simplest of the model joint facility use agreements. It is an agreement in which the community can use designated school district outdoor recreation facilities.
- **Model 2:** *Opening Indoor and Outdoor School Facilities for Use During Non-School Hours* is a model agreement in which the community can use designated school indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.
- **Model 3:** *Opening School Facilities for Use During Non-School Hours and Authorizing Third Parties to Operate Programs* is a model agreement in which the community can use designated school district indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. It also allows for third parties, such as youth organizations or youth sports leagues, to operate recreation programs using school facilities.
- **Model 4:** *Joint Facility Use of District and City Recreation Facilities* is a model agreement in which the school district and local government agree to open all or designated recreational facilities to each other for community and school use. It also allows for third parties, such as youth organizations or youth sports leagues, to operate recreation programs using school facilities.

IMMUNITY HAZARDS

School districts have a certain level of protection from lawsuits through what is referred to as governmental or sovereign immunity. This protection limits the extent to which public agencies can be found liable for harm they cause. The idea behind it is to protect public funds, because any judgment against a public agency is paid out of the public coffers. The scope of governmental immunity varies from state to state, but all states recognize some form of governmental immunity while limiting the level of liability protection it affords and the range of situations in which it applies.

Addressing immunity hazards before they occur is essential for protection of everyone involved with joint facility use. When drafting a written joint facility use agreement the parties entering into the agreement must consult with risk management professionals and legal counsel to determine insurance requirements, allocate risk, and ensure the agreement is consistent with state and local laws and regulations.

The Tennessee Recreational Joint Facility Use Agreements Toolkit is accompanied with an on-line interactive map called the Tennessee Recreational Joint Facility Use Finder. This tool displays active joint use agreements within the State and symbolizes each agreement based on the following agreement type:

- **Policy:** school policy approved by the school board for community use of school facilities;
- **Written Use Agreements:** include a contract between two different entities (i.e. city and school district) outlining the terms and conditions of the facility use;
- **Verbal Use Agreements:** include a spoken agreement between administrators (i.e. park director and school superintendent and/or principal) confirming the terms and conditions of the facility use;
- **Open Use Agreements:** occur when a facility allows use of certain facilities and recreational features for the public (i.e. during non-schools hours and excludes school events/functions); and,
- **Mixed Use Agreement:** are a mixed combination of the four different categories about joint facility use agreements.

Currently, six of the 12 Murfreesboro City Schools are actively being included within the partnership. The parkland acreage gained through this partnership totals to 81 acres, as referenced in Table 6.3, *Murfreesboro City Schools Active in Parks Partnership*. This additional parks acreage is not currently included within the 1,110 acreages of parkland acreage managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. The main reason for this is due to the fact that the Parks and Recreation Department has limited access at this time to city school properties. Schools currently limit the Parks and Recreation Department's usage of parks and recreation facilities on their campuses to after 6:00 pm year-round, which does not work most of the year given Daylight Saving Time and activities/program scheduling. According to the Parks and Recreation Department, access needs to be granted to the school grounds starting at 5:00 pm while schools are still in session, open on holidays, summers, and days schools are out during the school year.

TABLE 6.3, MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS ACTIVE IN PARKS PARTNERSHIP

School	Acres
Erma Siegel Elementary	15
Mitchell Neilson Elementary	23
Discovery School @ Bellwood	6
Black Fox Elementary	10
Cason Lane Elementary	15
Overall Creek Elementary	12
TOTAL	**81**
Percent of Total Murfreesboro City Schools acreage	**56%**

Source: City of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department

In order to achieve long-term viability, school-parks, must be accessible to the public; and future sites need to be designed with open, year-round, all-day access in mind. The important next steps require the Parks and Recreation Department and Murfreesboro City Schools to work through these types of logistics for the partnership to warrant sustained success. A written school-park agreement will be required to define the usage, policies, procedures, and rules which will ensure the long-term investment and stability of a shared resource.

[Continued on page 6.12]

The Contribution of Existing School Acreage

Murfreesboro City Schools

12 schools
150 acres

Rutherford County School Districts
(WITHIN CITY LIMITS AND URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY)

19 schools
400 acres

LIMITATIONS OF FACTORING-IN SCHOOL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM:

- Not all of the school acreage can be devoted to park space and available for use as a park; and
- Hours of use of school-park facilities are currently limited to when schools are out of session.

There is approximately **550 acres** of available land within the combined properties of Murfreesboro City Schools and Rutherford County School District to accommodate the additional park acreage needs based on the projected 2035 population for the Planning Area.

This underscores the importance of pursuing formal, written joint use agreements with all of Murfreesboro City Schools and the Rutherford County School District as a way to meet park needs and maintain a high quality of life for Murfreesboro's residents.

The following are important to consider as Murfreesboro City Schools and the Parks and Recreation Department engage in a written joint use agreement, including:

- Definition of time;
- Guidelines for operation;
- Partner roles and responsibilities; and,
- Liability.

Strategy 6.1: *Continue to execute joint-use agreements with Rutherford County School District and Murfreesboro City Schools.*

As evidenced with the current partnership between Rutherford County School District and the Parks and Recreation Department, whereby the School District contributed $1.2 million toward the construction of new the tennis court complex, the adoption of joint use agreements can be a cost-effective strategy for increasing physical activity among children and adults, and further extend the distribution and access of parkland to residents. School districts and local policymakers should ensure that the agreement:

- Clearly identifies eligible facilities that may be used for recreational purposes;
- Clearly defines eligible users and the times when facilities are available; and
- Specifies any liability and repair responsibilities for eligible users.

The National Policy and Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity provides resources to help develop and implement joint use agreements, including model agreements, as well as an overview of liability risks in all 50 states and a checklist for creating an agreement.[1]

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. The Parks and Recreation Department should continue engaging in formal joint facility use agreements with Rutherford County School District, for those RCSD schools within the planning area (City limits and Urban Growth Boundary).
2. The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to develop formal written use agreements with Murfreesboro City Schools including (and not limited to) guidelines for operation, partner roles and responsibilities, and liability.
3. Continue to explore broad ways in which to fund the development and operation of parks and facilities, through use of a variety of funding mechanisms and community involvement which at a minimum could consist of user fees, grants, fundraising, development charges, and cost-sharing agreements with other parties.

1 *More information about NPLAN's joint use agreement resources is available at www.nplanonline.org/nplan/joint-use.*

Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Standards for National Accreditation

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies' (CAPRA) *Standards for National Accreditation* provide an authoritative assessment tool for park and recreation agencies. Through compliance with these national standards of excellence, CAPRA accreditation assures policy makers, department staff, the general public and taxpayers that an accredited park and recreation agency has been independently evaluated against established benchmarks as delivering a high level of quality with respect to park facilities.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with the 151 standards for national accreditation. To achieve accreditation, an agency must comply with all 37 fundamental standards, and at least 85 percent, or 97, of the remaining 114 standards. CAPRA accreditation is a five-year cycle that includes three phases, including:

- Development of the agency self-assessment report;
- On-site evaluation; and,
- The Commission's review and decision.

If accreditation is granted by the Commission, the agency will develop a new self-assessment report and be revisited every five years. Within each of the four years between on-site visits, the agency will submit an annual report that addresses its continued compliance with the accreditation standards.

UNDERSTANDING STANDARDS

A standard is a statement of desirable practice as set forth by experienced professionals. In evaluating an agency for accreditation, the standards are a measure of effectiveness using the cause and effect ("if...then") approach. In practice, if an agency complies with a given standard, then it is expected that the agency's operations related to that standard will be positively affected. Viewed holistically, if an agency complies with the vast majority of the standards, then it is understood that the agency is performing a quality operation.

Strategy 6.2: *The City's Parks and Recreation Department should continue to aggressively pursue CAPRA agency accreditation.*

There are several benefits for pursuing CAPRA Agency accreditation. Benefits for the public include:

- Assurance and validation of well-administered services in accord with approved professional practices;
- Potential for external financial support and savings to the public;
- External recognition of a quality governmental service;
- Holds and agency accountable to the public and ensures responsiveness to meet their needs; and
- Improves customer and quality services.

Benefits for the agency include:

- Public and political recognition;
- Increased efficiency and evidence of accountability;
- Answers the question, "How are we doing?" through extensive self evaluation;
- Identifies areas for improvement by comparing an agency against national standards of best practice;
- Enhances staff teamwork and pride by engaging all staff in the process;
- Creates an environment for regular review of operations, policies and procedures, and promotes continual improvement; and
- Forces written documentation of policies and procedures.

The Parks and Recreation Department is currently certified at Tier III State accreditation. National CAPRA accreditation is very similar.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

The Parks and Recreation Department is currently working on the following actions:

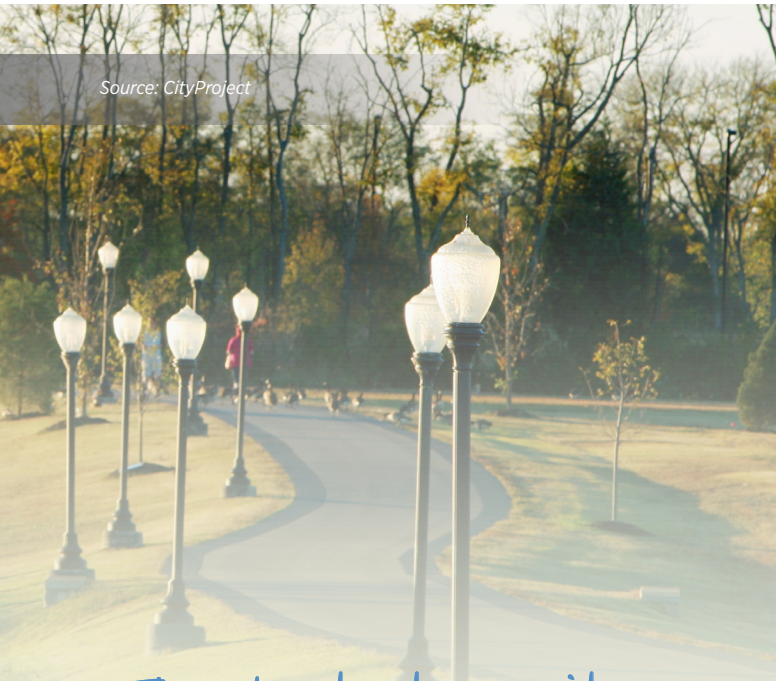
1. Based on review of CAPRA accreditation standards, develop a realistic schedule and plan of priority action items based on a determination of which Fundamental Standards remain to be completed and which remaining Standards the Parks and Recreation Department plans to fulfill.
2. Review the "Suggested Evidence of Compliance" section in order to identify an acceptable means of demonstrating compliance with a standard.
3. Based on CAPRA guidelines, prepare an "Agency Self-Assessment" and "Evidence of Compliance" and submit to the CAPRA.
4. Upon acceptance of the above-mentioned documentation, schedule a tour for CAPRA representatives to visit Murfreesboro's Parks and Recreation Department and its facilities.

[Continued on page 6.14]

Strategy 6.3: *Ensure the success of the Parks and Recreation Department through the continued development of the staff and department.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to encourage employee's membership and active participation in professional organizations.
2. Continue to conduct annual goal development sessions with leadership staff.
3. Continue to incorporate departmental goals into employee's annual appraisals.
4. Continue to support staff to obtain professional certifications such as Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) program, and others.



Source: CityProject

The standards provide an effective and credible means of evaluating a park and recreation agency's overall system.

NRPA, Benefits of CAPRA Agency Accreditation (http://www.nrpa.org/Professional-Development/Accreditation/Benefits-of-Agency-Accreditation/)

Murfreesboro Athletic Leagues

Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department has an award-winning athletics program that is recognized on national levels, and which strives to serve residents' needs. The City's athletic fields and facilities are being used to their full capacity, and many of the leagues are forced to turn away players and tournaments because there is not facility space available to accommodate all needs.

In the spring of 2012, Murfreesboro had 193 youth baseball teams playing on 11 fields. Of those fields, two are regulation baseball fields and only three are grass Little League fields. Most of the baseball teams play on skinned softball fields. In addition, two fields are only available on Saturdays due to the adult softball league. Adult softball utilizes three fields, and of these, two are within youth facilities. Girls' softball is limited to only 51 teams due to the limited number of fields which are available during the week. The four-field complex at McKnight Park plays host to a variety of baseball and softball tournaments every weekend.

A comprehensive list of the sports leagues within Murfreesboro that use the City's parks and recreation facility is found in Table 6.4, *Cooperative Use Agreement between Sports Leagues and Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department*.

Based on the demand for the facilities, seasons have been extended with play typically occurring most every day of the week. As referenced in Tables 6.5 and 6.6, *Murfreesboro Athletic Leagues and Facility Needs Information*, the high volume of the use of the existing 21 softball/baseball fields and eight multi-purpose fields is listed. As expected, this amount of usage takes a toll on the facilities and requires additional maintenance.

CURRENT FACILITIES COMPARED TO NATIONAL STANDARDS

The standards recommended by National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) represent a national average of minimum acceptable facilities to guide and assist regional development. The Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department uses these standards as a benchmark and guide, but recognizes that considerations for the individualized needs of each community must be taken into account. These comparative standards can be referenced in Table 6.7, *Park Type Needs Based on NRPA Park Land Standards*.

It is important to note that this is not a complete list of facilities. Recreational activity and facility needs change with changing demographics. For example, 20 years ago, the City may not have envisioned the need for a dog park; although the City now has the Murfreesboro Bark Park. In the next 20 years, residents of Murfreesboro will continue to make requests for additional recreational facilities, such as ice rinks, mountain bike trails, paddle sport opportunities and much more.

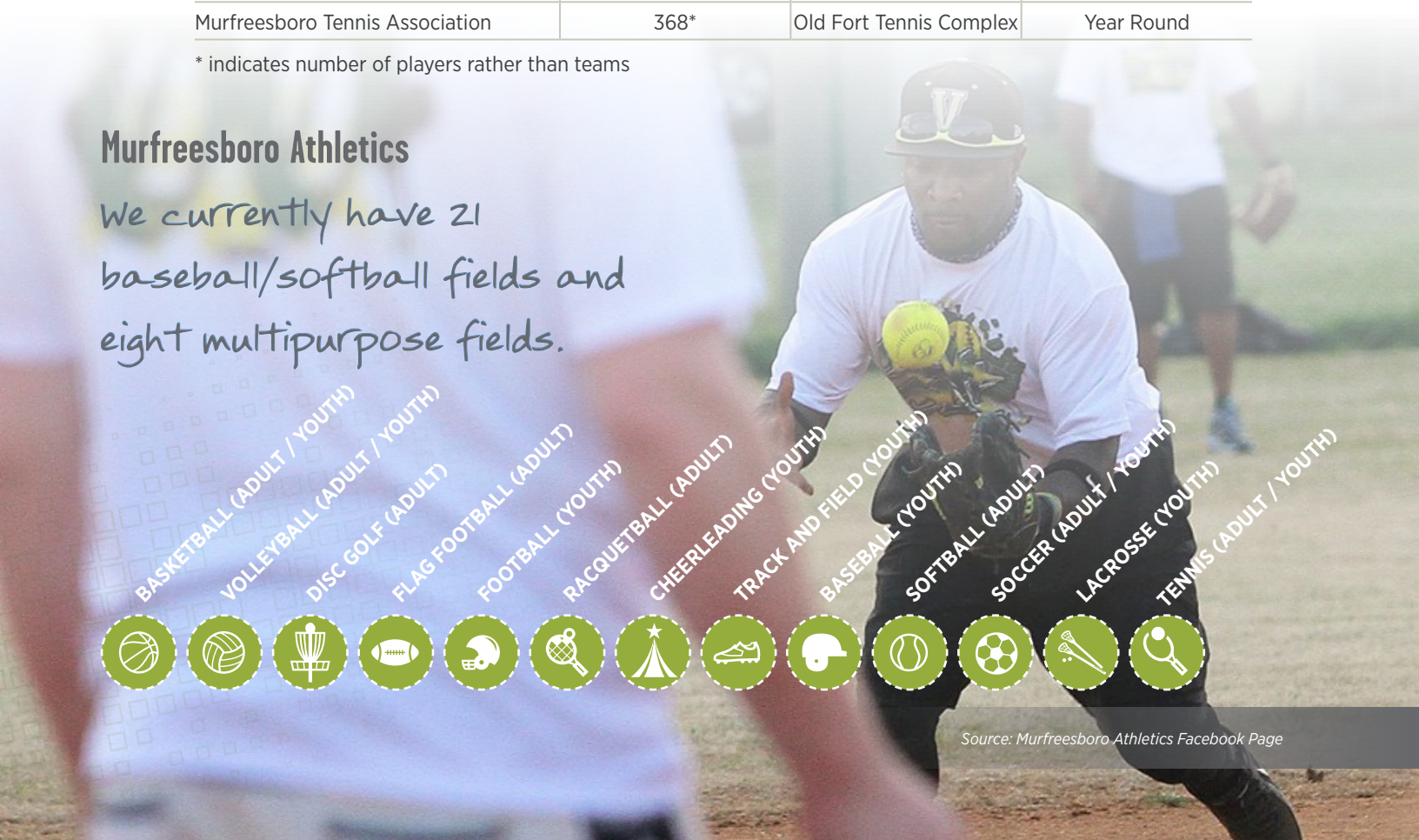
Of the approximately 1,110 acres of park land managed by the City's Parks and Recreation Department, over 400 acres (or 36 percent), including Barfield Backcountry area, wetland development, and river trails corridor, are passive recreation resources and are not able to be developed into additional active recreational facilities such as athletic fields. Exact acreages of the City's passive recreation resources can be referenced in Table 6.10, *Undevelopable Passive Recreation Resources*.

Currently, Murfreesboro's Parks and Recreation Department does not have the necessary land to consider developing additional athletic facilities or other types of facilities for parks and recreation.

TABLE 6.4, COOPERATIVE USE AGREEMENT BETWEEN SPORTS LEAGUES AND MURFREESBORO PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Sports League	Number of Teams	Park	Season
Murfreesboro Soccer Club	154	Richard Siegel Park	Fall / Spring
Murfreesboro Hispanic League	36	Richard Siegel Park	Fall / Spring
Murfreesboro Baseball Association	128	Barfield Crescent Park	Fall / Spring
Murfreesboro Optimist Club	70	Star*Plex	
Stones River Kiwanis Softball	51	McKnight Park	Fall / Spring
Murfreesboro Lacrosse Club	8	McKnight Park	
Middle Tennessee Disc Golf Association	138*	Barfield Cresent Park	Year round
Murfreesboro Tennis Association	368*	Old Fort Tennis Complex	Year Round

* indicates number of players rather than teams



Source: Murfreesboro Athletics Facebook Page

TABLE 6.5, MURFREESBORO ATHLETIC LEAGUES AND FACILITY NEEDS INFORMATION

Number of Teams	Groups	Number of Fields Used	Field Locations
Murfreesboro Baseball Association (utilize Barfield Crescent Park)			
80 (36 Rec, 44 Premier)	Ages 9-10 and 11-12 year old Kid Pitch Teams	3 Grassed Infield Fields	Barfield Crescent Park
18	Ages 7-8 year old Coach Pitch Teams	2 Fields	
30	Ages 4-6 year old T-Ball Teams	2 Fields (1 field is Saturday only)	
Murfreesboro Optimist Club (utilize Star*Plex)			
11	Ages 13-16 year old Senior Teams	1 Field for Practice and Games	Star*Plex
10	Ages 11-12 year old Majors Team	1 Skinned Field for Practice and Games	
16	Ages 9-10 year old Minor Team	1 Skinned Field for Practice and Games	
14	Ages 7-8 year old Coach Pitch Teams	1 Skinned Field for Practice and Games	
18	Ages 5-6 year old T-Ball Teams	1 Skinned Field for Practice and Games	
11	Ages 13-16 year old Senior Teams	1 Field for Practice and Games	
Stones River Kiwanis Softball (utilize McKnight Park)**			
6	6U T-Ball Teams	1 Temporary Skinned Field	McKnight Park
11	8U Coach Pitch Teams	1 Temporary Skinned Field and 1 Skinned Softball Field	
8	10U Coach Pitch Teams	1 Skinned Softball Field	
10	12 Kid Pitch Teams	1 Skinned Softball Field	
12	16U Softball Teams	2 Skinned Softball Field	
4	Travel Teams	1 Softball Field	
Murfreesboro Lacrosse Club			
8	Lacrosse	-	McKnight Park
YMCA			
8	Soccer Teams	-	YMCA
6	Flag Football Teams	-	

** Stones River Kiwanis Softball League is limited to playing during the week only, due to tournament use of facility.
*** Only 3 field are lighted. Football games are also limited to 80 yard playing field due to size restraints.

TABLE 6.6, MURFREESBORO ATHLETIC LEAGUES AND FACILITY NEEDS INFORMATION

Number of Teams	Groups	Number of Fields Used	Field Locations
Murfreesboro Football League (22 teams practicing and playing on 8 modified fields*)**			
4	Ages 11-13 year old Senior Teams	8, 80-yard modified playing fields	X
6	Ages 9-10 year old Junior Teams		
6	Ages 7-8 year old Minor Teams		
6	Ages 5-6 year old Flag Teams		
4	Ages 11-13 year old Senior Teams		
Central Magnet School (utilize Star*Plex and McKnight Softball Complex)			
2	Middle School Baseball Teams	X	Star*Plex and McKnight Park
2	High School Baseball Teams		
1	Middle School Softball Teams		
1	High School Softball Teams		
MRPD Adult Softball****			
28	Men' Church Teams	3 softball fields	Barfield Crescent Park, Star*Plex, and Old Fort Park
12	Men;s Rec Teams		
8	Men's Competitive Teams		
6	Women's Church Teams		
6	Women's Rec Teams		

**** MRPD's team capacity has been limited at 60 teams due to the use of only three fields at Barfield Crescent Park, Star*Plex, and Old Fort Park.

Currently, McKnight Park is at maximum capacity by the Stones River Kiwanis Softball League.

Source: Murfreesboro Athletics Facebook Page

Parks and Recreation as Economic Development Strategies

The social benefits of parks are well-documented and easily understood. As destinations for play and recreation, they have long served as community gathering places and locales for activity and fun. Playgrounds, athletic fields, swimming pools and gardens within parks provide tangible benefits during residents' leisure times. However, the economic benefits are less visible, despite a growing recognition that parks can and do generate quantifiable economic benefits for cities. Both planners and park professionals see the broader benefits that open, green spaces provide to cities, and recognize those resources are increasingly being used to revitalize communities, not just entertain residents.

SPORTS TOURISM AS ECONOMIC GAME-CHANGER[1]

There has been a significant rise in the number of sports events coming to Rutherford County. A variety of state, national and even international athletic competitions have been seeking out Middle Tennessee as a sports and recreation venue. In 2011, Murfreesboro was named one of the 150 best sports cities in the United States by *Sporting News* magazine. This rapid growth of sports tourism is earning Rutherford County a reputation as the "Sports Capital of Tennessee" – a phrase by the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce has trademarked.

Tourism in Rutherford County has increased an average of eight percent each year since 2001, topping $272 million in revenues in 2012. This surge is attributed to several new sporting venues which can host the larger sporting competitions. A prime example of these state-of-the-art facilities is the Richard Siegel Championship Soccer Complex, a $12.9 million facility that has 15 fields – nine of which are lighted – spread over 130 acres. For the past two years, the Tennessee Cup Youth Soccer Tournament has been held at the Siegel Complex, attracting more than 240 teams from across the nation. This four-day event brings in about 8,000 participants and a total of 35,000 visitors, creating an economic impact of approximately $2 million.

1 Source: Sports Tourism Is Economic Game Changer in Rutherford County, TN. Cary Estes. 29, May 2014. (http://businessclimate.com/murfreesboro-smyrna-la-vergne-tn-economic-development/sports-tourism-economic-game-changer-rutherford)

"It's all about rolling out the red carpet, providing southern hospitality and showing visitors the sports facilities we have here. Once they're exposed to that and see what we have to offer – and the fact that we are in the geographic center of the state and within a day's drive of much of the eastern United States – it makes us a perfect destination for sports events."

-Barbara Wolke, Vice President of Rutherford County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Since 2006, the Siegel complex has also been the site of Spring Fling, a series of tournaments that determines the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association champions in baseball, track, softball, tennis and boys soccer. This event has a $3.5 million impact on the county.

Rutherford County and Murfreesboro also benefits from the quality venues found at Middle Tennessee State University as well. MTSU has new facilities for track and baseball that have been used for several state events. Additionally, the university's athletic program recently joined Conference USA – which has members from Virginia to Texas – and is now bringing C-USA tournaments to campus, such as the 2013 conference volleyball championship.

New facilities are also opening at Old Fort Park, a 50-acre park that has two trailheads connecting to Murfreesboro's newly expanded greenway system. A $6 million indoor tennis facility with eight indoor courts and 24 outdoor courts is scheduled to open in 2015; and a six-hole golf course designed for junior-level players, Bloomfield Links, was recently completed. Both are expected to draw additional tournaments to the region.

[Continued on page 6.21]

Source: Ken Robinson

The focus of many current athletic events is youth sports, but as MTSU and Murfreesboro continue to improve facilities and add new facilities, opportunities may be available to attract athletes and fans of all ages to the community.

Source: Sports Tourism Helps Boost Economy. 2, December 2014.
http://www.dnj.com/story/opinion/editorials/2014/12/02/sports-tourism-helps-boost-economy/19713869/

*Source: Sports*Cpom Facebook Page*

Active Versus Passive Recreation

The types of recreation chosen for a specific park can vary depending on the surrounding population's age. Age plays a huge factor in these decisions because physical capacities at different ages vary dramatically such as eyesight, mobility, hearing, and dexterity. As discussed in previous chapters of this Comprehensive Plan, the majority of the population is comprised of young families and therefore the City needs to provide citizens with enough variety in order to equally serve the population. The most basic differences between passive and active recreation are described below.

ACTIVE PARKS

- Active recreation refers to a mix of uses in a park that includes the following facilities or facility types: athletic fields, buildings or structures for recreational activities, concessions, community gardens, outdoor courses or courts (basketball, volleyball, and tennis), children's play areas, picnic shelters, restrooms, event areas, and dog parks.
- Active parks sometimes include more loosely structured areas for softball, soccer, Frisbee/Frisbee golf, and pick up games.

PASSIVE PARKS

- Passive recreation areas refer to a mix of uses typically found in a neighborhood park, undeveloped land or minimally improved lands that may include the following: landscaped area, natural area, ornamental garden, non-landscaped greenspace; landscape furnishings, such as decorative water features, such as a fountain; picnic area, or trail without recreational staffing.
- These "unprogrammed spaces" allow for a variety of uses because they accommodate change of use over time, as the needs or interests of the community change.

Strategy 6.4: *Promote and enhance sports and other active recreational activities as catalysts for economic development and tourism.*

Partner in contributing to the City's economic development by attracting sports-oriented tourists and businesses to recreational attractions in and around Murfreesboro.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to partner with Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and Rutherford County Convention and Visitors Bureau to expand Murfreesboro's attraction as a quality year-round tourist destination with respect to its recreation and cultural resources.
2. Develop a comprehensive Sport Tourism Strategy and Implementation Plan.
3. Continue to promote sports tourism through hosting regional and statewide sports tournaments.
4. Continue to provide, promote and encourage community and regional events and programs that provide access to a variety of cultural arts and heritage based tourism opportunities.
5. Continue to build a database of volunteers and resources to support sport tourism events.
6. Continue to implement the City-Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce' distinctive directional signage and way-finding system for key attractions and sites in and around the City.

Strategy 6.5: *Retrofit existing, under-utilized parks to support sporting events and sports tourism-related activities.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Strategically enhance new and existing parks and facilities to support tournament hosting.
2. Increase the Parks Department's mobile bleacher inventory to provide more spectator seating capacity.

Strategy 6.6: *Continue to develop targeted performance measures through which to quantify increases in sports tourism-related activities and subsequent economic impact.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Develop baseline spending estimates for money spent in the community based on particular events.
2. Consider the utility of employing the Sport Tourism Economic Impact Model (STEAM) as a standard post event reporting and analysis, incorporating event performance indicators, visitor metrics and economic benefits capacity.

Parks and Recreation Needs

Ensuring equitable opportunity and access to the City's park and recreation system and facilities is comprised of several different components. The first is ensuring that there is adequate availability of park and recreation lands and facilities in the Murfreesboro parks and recreation system. This requires an analysis of the City's current acreage compared to a NRPA standard of park land acres per capita in the City. The results will show whether there is currently an excess or deficit in acres of parkland to meet the needs of the City's current population. Next, this same analysis is then applied to the 2035 projected population to determine the park acreage required in 2035.

Once the current and projected 2035 park acreage needs are identified, additional park property acquisition and/or joint partnerships may be pursued in the areas where an existing need has been identified. These need areas were identified in Figure 6.2, *Parks and Recreation Systems Map*. If the process proceeds as intended, the Parks and Recreation System Map will be used by the City's elected and appointed officials, and staff, to identify general, yet targeted areas, where future park property acquisitions and/or partnerships will provide the greatest benefits to Murfreesboro's residents.

Finally, an analysis must be undertaken to determine the adequacy of the current facilities to ensure the quantities and types of facilities and equipment are meeting today's standards and in the future.

DETERMINING NEED

A variety of methods may be utilized to assess the need for parks and recreation areas and facilities. The level of sufficiency of the existing parks and recreation system was determined by applying national demand-based approach standards.

Standards provide measures to determine the amount of land needed for parks and recreation to meet the demands and desires of citizens and visitors. Parks and recreation standards are typically expressed in terms of acres of land dedicated for parks and recreation use per unit of population. While general standards are useful, it is important to establish standards that are based upon unique local considerations such as participation trends, user characteristics, demographics, socioeconomics, climate, natural environment and other considerations. Leisure, recreation and health values are unique to each municipality; therefore, the standards should represent the interests and desires of the community.

[Continued on page 6.22]

NRPA published the *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* to establish nationally applicable criteria for the provision of parks and recreation facilities and have set forth standards for recommended acreage of parks per 1,000 persons. These national standards range from 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 persons for neighborhood parks, and 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 persons for community parks.

PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEMS MAP

Based on NRPA parkland standards and the 2014 population of 118,676, Murfreesboro has a surplus of community and regional park amenities (by 179.7 acres and 97.7 acres respectively). On the other hand, the City has a deficit of neighborhood parks by 168 acres based on the per capita NRPA standard. Because the surplus of community and regional parks is so large, the City of Murfreesboro is currently exceeding the overall acreage standards by roughly 100 acres with its existing 774 combined acreage of neighborhood, community and regional parks.

The estimated total need of each park type based on the 2035 projected population of 228,090 is 1,277 acres, a 92 percent increase in park space demand. Current neighborhood park acreage is 332 acres below the estimated 2035 need. Similarly, current regional park acreage is 208.6 acres below the estimated 2035 needs. Existing community park acreage exceeds the 2035 demands by 37.5 acres. This shows the strength of the Parks and Recreation Department's efforts to expand community park facilities, often with extensive recreation opportunities throughout the City. As the Parks and Recreation Department focuses on maintaining current facilities and meeting future demand, there should be particular focus on the development of neighborhood parks throughout the City to provide more distribution, and therefore more access to the parks and recreation system by all residents. This needs assessment can be referenced in Table 6.7, *Park Type Needs Based on NRPA Park Land Standards* below.

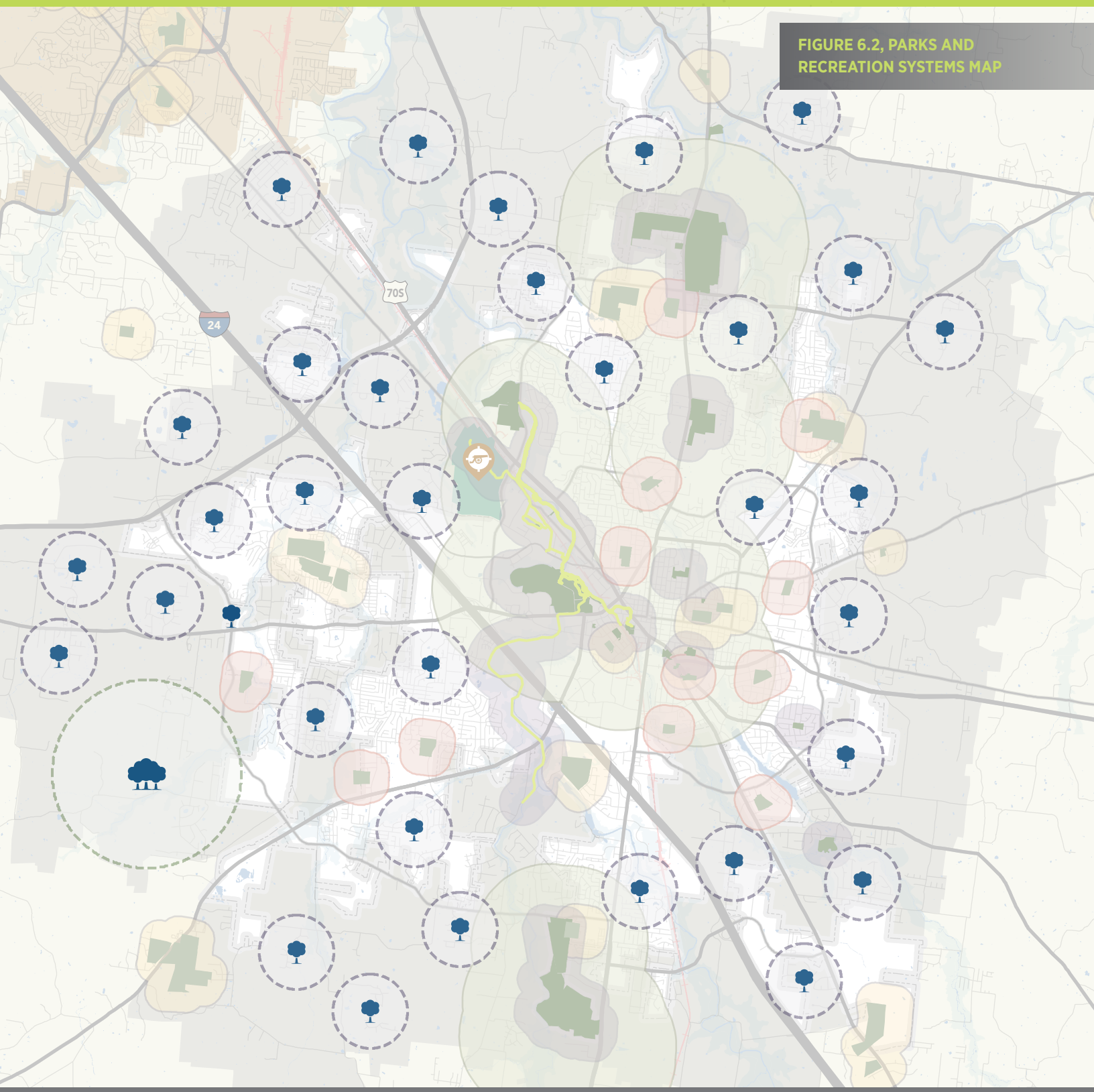
> During peak season, one can see as many as 3,000 to 5,000 people in our parks per day. This translates to 10,000 to 15,000 people in all our parks on peak days.
>
> *- Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department: Strategic Action Plan 2010-2015*

The park type needs assessment laid an important foundation for the development of the Parks and Recreation System Plan. An important goal of the park and recreation system is to ensure broad distribution and accessibility. To develop a system of neighborhood and community parks that will adequately serve the existing and projected future parks and recreation needs of the community, the City needs to acquire and develop parks in areas of need as identified on Figure 6.2, *Parks and Recreation Systems Map*. These parks will help to achieve full service area coverage of neighborhood and community parks within the City and Urban Growth Boundary. As shown in Figure 6.2, there are a significant number of proposed neighborhood parks in order to address the current and future deficit based on existing neighborhood park acreage. *[Continued on page 6.24]*

TABLE 6.7, PARK TYPE NEEDS BASED ON NRPA PARK LAND STANDARDS

Type	NRPA Standard: Acres per 1,000 Residents	Existing Murfreesboro Park Acreage by Park Type	Current Needs (Based on 2014 Census population of 118,676	Current Existing Facilities are (+) and (-) 2014 Standard	Estimated Need Based on 2035 Projected Population of 228,090	Current Existing Facilities are (+) and (-) 2035 Standard
Neighborhood Parks	1 - 2 acres	9.9 acres	178 acres	-168 acres	342 acres	-332 acres
Community Parks	5 - 8 acres	334 acres	154 acres	+179.7 acres	296.5 acres	+37.5 acres
Regional Parks	5 - 10 acres (200+ acres desirable)	430 acres	332 acres	+97.7 acres	638.6 acres	-208.6 acres
TOTAL		**774 acres**	**664.5 acres**		**1,277 acres**	

FIGURE 6.2, PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEMS MAP



POTENTIAL NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PARK AND SERVICE AREA, NOT PARCEL SPECIFIC*

POTENTIAL NEW REGIONAL PARK AND SERVICE AREA, NOT PARCEL SPECIFIC

*Potential new parks' symbol is not parcel-specific and represents in the need for an estimated 10 neighborhood parks in this general area.

MCS PLAYGROUND SERVICE AREA (0.25 MILE)

RCSD PLAYGROUND SERVICE AREA (0.25 MILE)

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK SERVICE AREA (0.25 MILE)

COMMUNITY PARK SERVICE AREA (1 MILE)*

EXISTING GREENWAY

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

As evidenced in Table 6.8, *Murfreesboro Active Recreation Facility Needs*, there is a significant deficit in the City's provision of active recreation facilities for the City's sports leagues and active citizens. It is difficult to estimate the spatial requirements for active recreation facilities. While several smaller facilities, such as tennis courts, playgrounds, picnic shelters and volleyball courts, can be accommodated within existing neighborhood, community, and regional parks; multi-purpose facilities such as community centers, swimming pools, football, baseball and soccer fields require additional programmatic elements, such as bleachers, lighting, concession stands, bathrooms, and parking areas; and therefore should be assigned additional land area specific to the recreational activity. Accommodating the City's active recreation needs underscores the importance of formulating and executing joint use agreements with Murfreesboro City Schools and Rutherford County School District.

[continued on page 6.28]

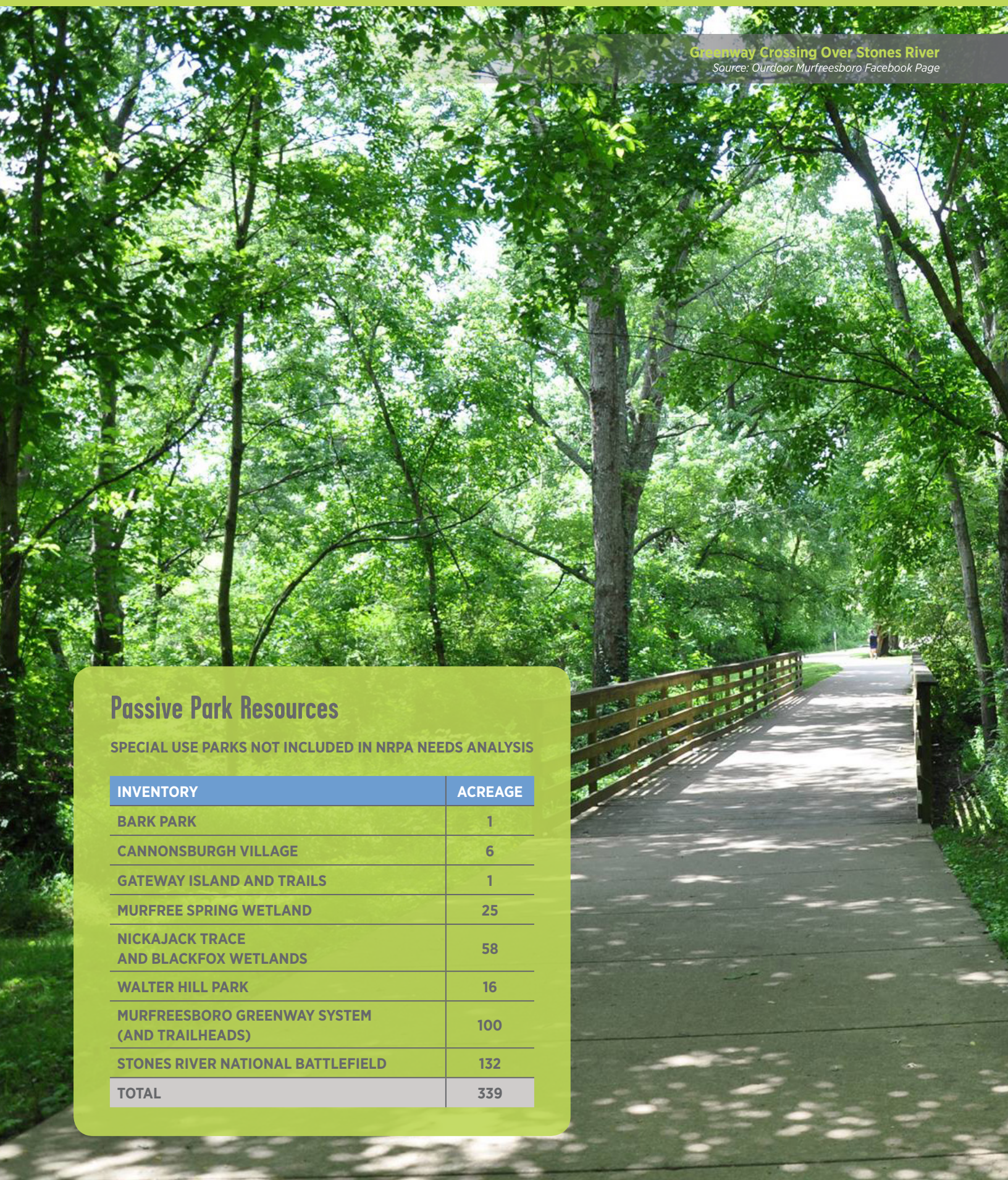
Source: Murfreesboro Athletics Facebook Page

TABLE 6.8, MURFREESBORO ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITY NEEDS

Activity/Facility	NRPA Standard	Murfreesboro Existing Facilities	Current Needs (Based on 2014 Census population of 118,676	Current Existing Facilities are (+) and (-) 2014 Standard	Estimated Need Based on 2035 Projected Population of 228,090	Current Existing Facilities are (+) and (-) 2035 Standard
Outdoor Basketball	1 per 5,000	6 courts	24 courts	-18 courts	46 courts	-40 courts
Baseball/Softball	1 per 2,500	21 fields	48 fields	-27 fields	91 fields	-70 fields
Football* **	1 per 20,000	8 fields	6 fields	+2*** fields	11 fields	-5 fields
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	60 courts	59 courts	+1 court	114 courts	-53 courts
Volleyball	1 per 5,000	6 courts	24 courts	-18 courts	45 courts	-39 courts
Swimming Pools	1 per 20,000	3 pools	6 pools	-3 pools	11 pools	-8 pools
Neighborhood Centers	1 per 10,000	2 centers	12 centers	-10 centers	23 centers	-21 centers
Community Centers	1 per 15-25,000	2 centers	8/5 centers	-6/-3 centers	15 centers	-13 centers
Soccer Fields	1 per 10,000	15 fields	12 fields	+3 fields	23 fields	-8 fields
Picnic Shelters	1 per 5,000	24 shelters	24 shelters	0 shelters	46 shelters	-22 shelters
Playgrounds	1 per 2,500	13 playgrounds	48 playgrounds	-35 playgrounds	91 playgrounds	-78 playgrounds

* One of the national standards given is the number of acres needed for recreation. This standard is generally given with the assumption that the land can be developed for its intended purpose.

*** The football program currently plays on the Multi-Purpose field at McKnight Park, which will no longer be possible with the airport expansion project



Greenway Crossing Over Stones River
Source: Ourdoor Murfreesboro Facebook Page

Passive Park Resources

SPECIAL USE PARKS NOT INCLUDED IN NRPA NEEDS ANALYSIS

INVENTORY	ACREAGE
BARK PARK	1
CANNONSBURGH VILLAGE	6
GATEWAY ISLAND AND TRAILS	1
MURFREE SPRING WETLAND	25
NICKAJACK TRACE AND BLACKFOX WETLANDS	58
WALTER HILL PARK	16
MURFREESBORO GREENWAY SYSTEM (AND TRAILHEADS)	100
STONES RIVER NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD	132
TOTAL	339

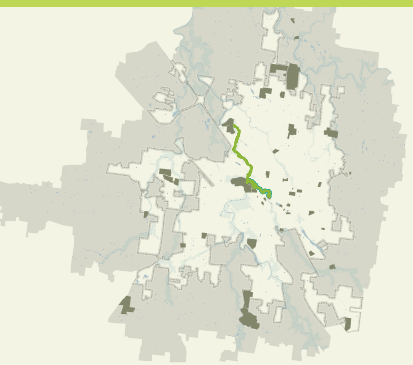
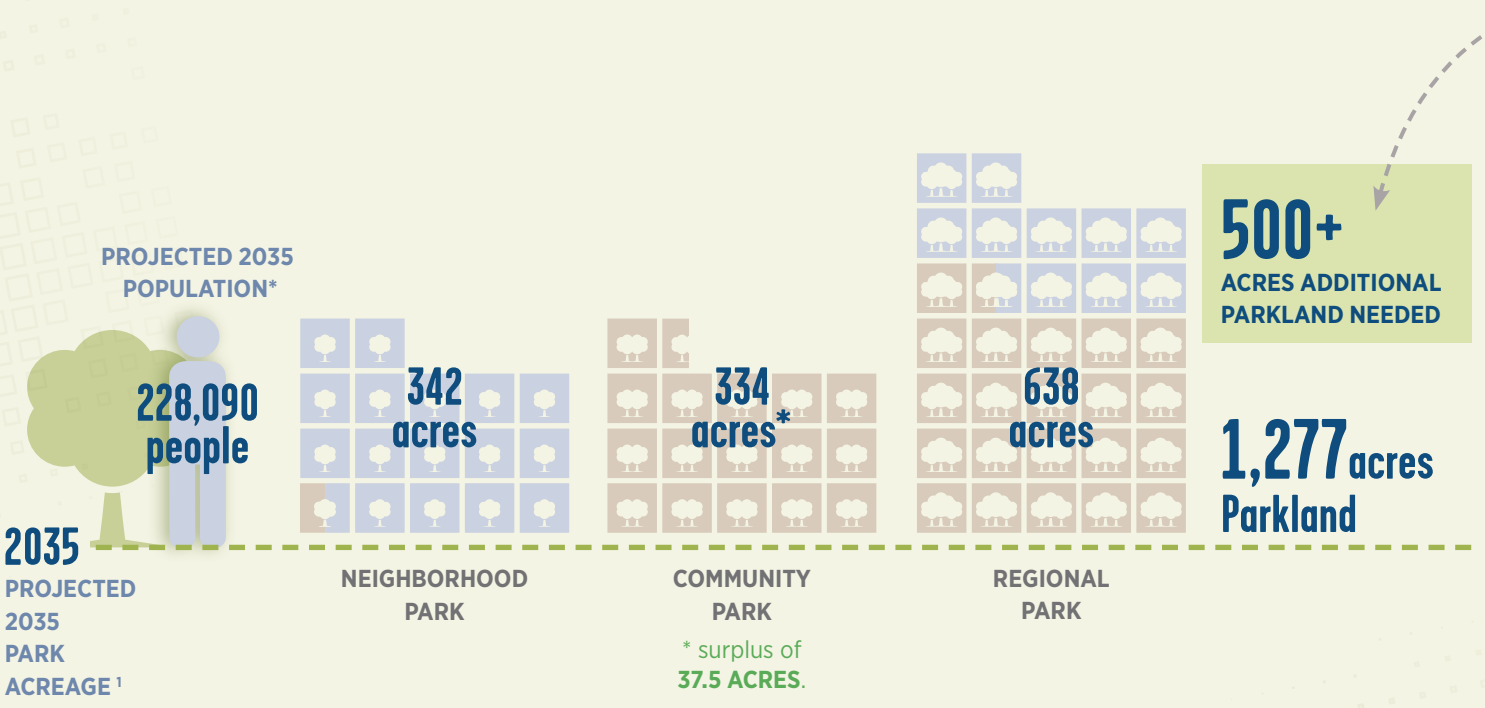


FIGURE 6.3, PARKS AND RECREATION ACREAGE SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Park Land: Supply and Demand

WHAT DO THE POPULATION INCREASES FOR THE CITY LOOK LIKE IN TERMS OF PARK AREA NEEDS TO MEET THE RECREATION FACILITIES DEMAND?

= Neighborhood Park
= Community Park
= Regional Park
= 20 acres



1 Using 2013 population as base comparison population

BASEBALL / SOFTBALL:	**70 FIELDS** at 2 acres / field	=	**140 acres***
FOOTBALL:	**5 FIELDS** at 13 acres / field	=	**65 acres***
SOCCER:	**8 FIELDS** at 13 acres / field	=	**101 acres***
SWIMMING POOLS:	**8 POOLS** at 2 acres / pool site	=	**16 acres****
COMMUNITY CENTER:	**13 CENTERS** at 8 acres / center	=	**104 acres**
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER:	**21 CENTERS** at 1 acre / center (including parking)	=	**21 acres**
TENNIS:	**53 COURTS**	=	**30 acres*****

OUTDOOR BASKETBALL:

VOLLEYBALL:

PICNIC SHELTERS:

PLAYGROUNDS:

=

Projected acreage requirements can be built into the additional parkland area needed.

PROJECTED 2035 POPULATION*

228,090 people

477 acres Activities / Facilities

Acreage requirements are approximate and are for general planning / programming purposes only. It is recognized that some sports fields and other facilities may be incorporated into new community and/ or regional parks. It is also assumed that MCS and RCSD fields may be able to accommodate some of this future need.

2035 PROJECTED 2035 ACTIVITIES / FACILITIES ACREAGE [1]

* includes concessions, bleachers, and parking.
** average between a 50 meter and a 25 meter competition pool; includes concessions, bleachers, and parking.
*** based roughly on Old Fort Park Tennis Complex - 16 acres for 30 courts (8 indoor, 24 outdoor); includes concessions, bleachers, and parking.
**** based on size / area of Patterson Park Community Center.

1 Using 2013 population as base comparison population

Strategy 6.7: *Provide parks and recreation facilities that meet - or exceed - the established local standards and provide for both the present and future needs of the community.*

Acquire land and develop parks in the identified "need areas," as displayed in *Figure 6.2, Parks and Recreation Systems Map,* to provide an even distribution of parks and thus, equitable opportunities and convenient access in all areas of the planning area (lands within the City limits and Urban Growth Boundary). Specifically, focus attention on the acquisition of one to two acre neighborhood park sites to achieve standards.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to identify available properties within the city limits to establish new neighborhood and community parks in areas of need.
2. Continue to work with the Rutherford County Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Department, and Property Assessor's Office to identify available property within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to identify appropriate locations for new neighborhood and community parks in areas of need.

Strategy 6.8: Accommodate the current and future needs of residents by providing a system of mini-parks and neighborhood play areas.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. The City's Parks and Recreation Department should continue to work with Murfreesboro Sewer and Water Department (MSWD), the Engineering Department, the Planning and Zoning Department, homeowners associations and other neighborhood groups to identify small parcels of unimproved land within existing neighborhoods that may be utilized for mini, or pocket parks. There may be portions of land within utilities easements or right-of-way that may be available.
2. Utilizing standard park facilities, such as benches, a water fountain, trees and shrubs (depending on the size of the parcel, some playground equipment), develop a standard pocket park design program and cost estimate to facilitate discussion regarding the character and costs of physical improvements, and maintenance of said improvements.
3. Continue to work with community gardening organizations to convert unused available land into neighborhood garden plots.
4. In conjunction with homeowners associations, develop an Adopt-a-Park program for pocket parks within neighborhoods.

Strategy 6.9: *Ensure parks are accessible, safe, and connected to their adjacent neighborhoods and other areas of the City.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Work in coordination with the City's Engineering Department to improve off-site accessibility to each park by developing a sidewalk improvement program to repair, replace, or install new sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb cuts, in high pedestrian use neighborhoods immediately surrounding the parks, schools, and other community facilities.
2. Improve on-site accessibility for persons with physical disabilities, elderly, people with strollers, among others, so that one can travel from off-site (i.e., neighborhoods) or the parking lot, and into and through the park to each amenity.
3. Ensure that ADA-compliant handicapped accessible ramps, play structures, and equipment are incorporated into every municipal park.
4. Add lighting in parks, school sports fields, at greenway trailhead parking lots and along greenways where needed.

Strategy 6.10: *Incorporate park-level design that supports connectivity.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to plan for and develop comprehensive street, sidewalk, and bike-lane networks that connect neighborhoods and recreation destination points to parks and greenways.
   - Ensure land development codes and subdivision regulations promote connectivity as part of infill and new development.
2. Continue to utilize American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) recommendations for sidewalk widths to ensure that connecting sidewalks are wide enough to support pedestrians walking in groups.
3. Continue to provide frequent park and greenway access points.

[Continued on page 6.30]

Source: Ken Robinson

NEIGHBORHOODS:

"I want to be able to walk or bike from my home to a park, without getting in a car. I want my child to grow up spending time playing outside, and I want our family to play in safe parks and trails. Sidewalks are important, and I prefer greenways and multi-use paths as shown in Murfreesboro's Greenway Blueway and Bikeway Master Plan. I think every child and adult in Murfreesboro needs access to parks and greenspace."

Financing Parkland Needs

As shown in Figure 6.3, *Parks and Recreation Acreage Supply and Demand*, Murfreesboro's continued growth translates into a need for additional park facilities. Developing and maintaining a high-quality park system, in response to Murfreesboro's projected growth, is an opportunity for the City to enhance its residents' quality of life and to continue its leadership in providing for the recreational needs of the Middle Tennessee region.

Murfreesboro must equip itself with the regulatory tools and needed capital to provide the necessary resources, both physical and fiscal, to ensure that the quality of life of the City's residents remains a top priority.

The methods of financing parkland acquisition and development include:

- General Fund Revenues;
- General Obligation Bonds;
- Revenue Bonds;
- Federal and State Assistance; and
- Parkland Dedication, fees-in-lieu, and park development.

GENERAL FUND REVENUES

General fund revenues have traditionally provided the principal source of funds for the general operations and maintenance of the City's parks and recreation system. Recreation as a public service is scheduled along with public works, fire and police protection, schools and many other functions of the city government in annual budgets adopted by the City. General fund revenues typically cover operation and maintenance needs of the Parks and Recreation Department with a limited amount of funds available for capital improvements.

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

The State of Tennessee gives municipal governments the authority to borrow funds for parks and recreation facilities through the issuance of bonds. For the purpose of paying the debt on these bonds, the City is empowered to levy taxes.

REVENUE BONDS

Nationally, revenue bonds have become a popular method for financing high-use specialty, revenue-generating facilities such as aquatic centers, golf courses, ice rinks, tennis centers, and sports complexes/fields. The City's use of this source of funding would require an evaluation of the City's fee practices and would be limited to certain revenue producing facilities. Used in combination with other funding methods, revenue bonds can be effective and should be used as appropriate.

STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is available and may be used in low/moderate income neighborhoods within the City for land acquisition and development of recreation facilities.

The State of Tennessee, through the enactment of the 1991 Partnership Act, created the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF). LPRF funds are available, on a competitive basis, providing grants requiring a 50 percent match by the City for acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities.

Additionally, the State funds projects such as bikeways and pedestrian facilities through the federally funded Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) administers the program, and the City can apply for these funds for the development of bikeways and greenways systems. The Parks and Recreation Department routinely pursues and has been awarded funding through State and TEA-21 programs for its parks and greenway.

Additional Grant Sources for Parkland Funding

- **Tennessee Recreation Trail Program (RTP):** provides grant money for use towards the construction of multi-use trails.
- **Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) Grants:** provides matching grants to states, and through the state to local governments and state agencies that provide recreation and parks, for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.
- **Grants to Artists and Arts Organizations:** provides dollars that are administered by the Tennessee Arts Commission through funds from the National Endowment for the Arts for programs that enhance cultural programs in the City.
- **Tree Planting Grants:** provides grant money for projects involving tree planting on public lands.
- **Urban Forestry Grants:** for a variety of projects related to trees in the urban environment.

PARKLAND DEDICATION, FEES-IN-LIEU, AND PARK LAND DEVELOPMENT FEES

Parkland dedication is a local government requirement imposed on subdivision and site plan applications mandating the dedication of land for a park and/or the payment of a fee to be used by the governmental entity to acquire land and/or develop park facilities. These dedications are a means of providing park facilities in newly developed areas of a jurisdiction without burdening existing city residents. They may be conceptualized as a type of user, or impact fee because the intent is that the landowner, developer, or new homeowners those who are responsible for creating the demand for the new park facilities - should pay for the costs of the new parks. On one hand, parkland dedication and fees-in-lieu is a fiscally conservative model in that those who are benefiting from the services are paying for it. The alternative is to raise taxes on existing residents or lower the community's quality of life, neither of which are politically attractive.

Parkland dedication fees ensure that new development pays for new park demands, thereby maintaining Murfreesboro's quality of life over the years to come. Based on the park acreage deficit that the City is currently facing, as well as the projected population increase of roughly 100,000 additional residents, the establishment of a new means of generating capital for funding the development, operation and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities is essential to maintaining quality of life for all residents in the face of growth.

Benefits of parkland dedication and/or fees-in-lieu are many and include:

- The City is financially able to purchase parks in accordance with a predetermined plan;
- The money for parkland development is available when needed; and,
- The residents/developer involved directly see the benefit of the park fee.

The philosophy is that because new development generates a need for additional park amenities, the people responsible for creating that need should bear the cost of providing the new amenities. Neighborhood and community parks are intended to serve those people in the areas proximate to them[1].

A municipality may also require a developer to construct recreational facilities, pay to the municipality a fee to be used instead of dedicating land (i.e., "fee-in-lieu")

[Continued on page 6.32]

Growth Management and Parkland Dedication

The creation of a parkland dedication ordinance is designed to provide a framework within which the city can correct existing deficiencies in parkland funds and also provide the necessary facilities to accommodate future growth.

The Tennessee State Recreation Plan identified inadequate funding for park facilities and recreation programs as a key issue that must be addressed if local governments are to maintain basic services.

An appealing feature of parkland dedication is that it is responsive to market conditions. If fewer new people come to the City than predicted, then less money is forthcoming, so fewer parks are built. Similarly, as costs for acquisition and development of parks increase (or decrease), then parkland dedication requirements can be increased (or decreased) accordingly.

From the perspective of elected officials, who are the key decision makers on this issue, parkland dedication enables them to protect the interests of current residents and to manage growth. A basic and long-held principle of growth management is that development must be supported by adequate public facilities and services, and that private and public investment must be coordinated to achieve that objective. Parkland dedication ordinances are intended to ensure that park facilities are available when homeowners purchase their new homes, and to avoid authorizing development without ensuring that the park infrastructure necessary to support the new demands is available.

A bedrock principle of fiscal conservatism is the 'Benefit Principle', which states that those who benefit from government services should pay for them.

Source: Crompton, John L. An Analysis of Parkland Dedication Ordinances in Texas. Journal of Park and Recreation Administration. Spring 2010, Volume 28, No. 1; pages 70-102.

Calculating the Amount of a Park Dedication Requirement

The dedication requirement in a parkland dedication ordinance should be comprised of three elements:

- A Land Requirement;
- A Fee-in-Lieu to the Land Requirement; and
- A Parks Development Fee.

A problem with ordinances that contain only the land and fee-in-lieu elements is that they provide only for the acquisition of land. The additional capital needed to transform that bare land into a park is borne by existing taxpayers.

or a combination of land dedication, construction of recreational facilities, or the payment of the fee. The dedicated parkland or the payment of the fee is to be used by the municipality to ensure that future residents of the subdivision or land development have adequate park and recreational opportunities.

Parkland Dedication and Fee-In-Lieu Ordinances can provide the following benefits:

- **Energy Conservation:** Recreational areas provided through Parkland Dedication and Fee-In-Lieu Ordinances inherently conserve energy by encouraging efficient land use, reducing the reliance on vehicles to access recreational areas, and by creating opportunities for walkable activities based on Smart Growth principles;
- **Recreational Opportunities:** Recreational areas and opportunities can be created during the design stage of subdivisions and land developments, when design flexibility is potentially greatest;
- **Reduced Reliance on Public Expenditures:** Public expenditures for recreational facilities are reduced;
- **Additional Funding Potential:** Fee-In-Lieu Ordinances can generate funds to match other grant sources; and
- **Flexibility:** Fee-In-Lieu can used to meet recreational needs in areas where dedicated land may not be practical.

However, the following limitations may be associated with Parkland Dedication and Fee-In-Lieu Ordinances:

- **Cannot be Used to Provide Parkland in Other Areas:** Parkland Dedication and Fee-In-Lieu Ordinances cannot be used to address an existing lack of recreational areas (i.e., Parkland Dedication and Fee-In-Lieu Ordinances cannot be used to provide recreational areas for existing neighborhoods that do not have any).
- **Recreation Plan Required:** A municipality's Code of Ordinances typically requires that the governing body must have a formally adopted parks and recreation master plan, and the park and recreational facilities are in accordance with principles and standards contained in the subdivision and land development ordinance;
- **Accessibility Requirements:** Recreation land or fees, or combination thereof, are to be used only for the purpose of providing park or recreational facilities accessible to the development.

A problem with ordinances that contain only the land and fee-in-lieu elements is that they provide only for the acquisition of land. The additional capital needed to transform that bare land into a park is borne by existing taxpayers. In some instances, the result is that the dedicated land is never developed into a park and remains sterile open space which detracts from a community's appeal rather than adding to it. As a result, many communities across the country have expanded their ordinances to incorporate a park development fee element to pay for the cost of transforming the land into a park.

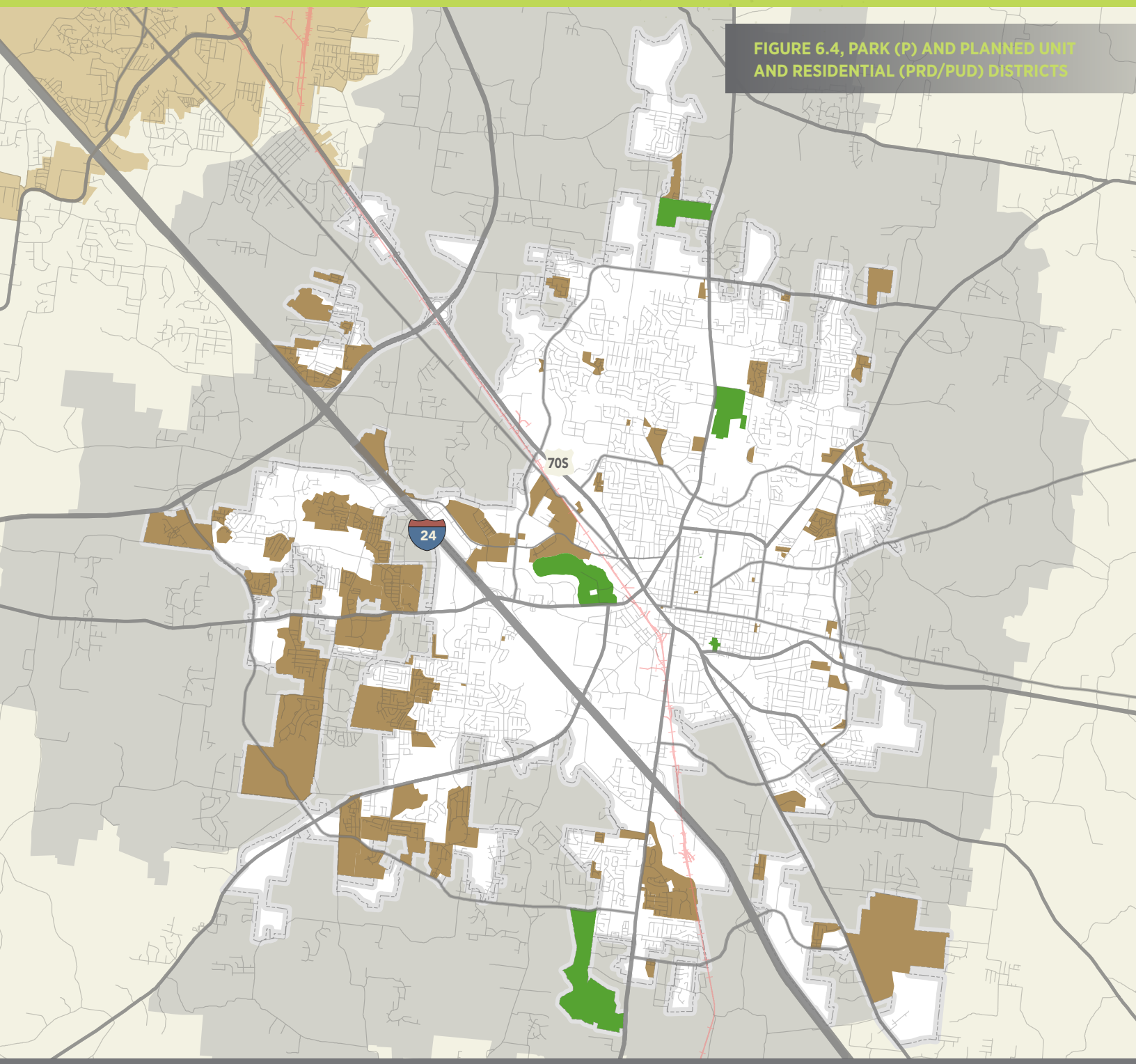
Strategy 6.11: *Consider amending the Murfreesboro City Code, Appendix A to include a Parkland Dedication Ordinance that includes provisions for Fees-in-Lieu and Development Fees.*

The City of Murfreesboro's parkland dedication ordinance should include the following provisions:

- Land must be suitable for park development and approved by the City.
- Land dedication requirements based upon one acre per a designated number of dwelling units in the entirety of the residential development and not by sections or phases;
- Designation of park zones for which fees collected within the zone will be within the zone;
- Discretion of the City to require payment-in-lieu of land dedication for expansion or improvement of existing facilities (rather than development of new facilities) within the same zone as a proposed development;
- Requirement of land dedication or fee upon issuance of a building permit where a plat is not required;
- Fees shall be equal to the sum of the average price of land and on-site improvements of other park facilities, which shall be computed on a per dwelling unit basis;

[Continued on page 6.34]

FIGURE 6.4, PARK (P) AND PLANNED UNIT AND RESIDENTIAL (PRD/PUD) DISTRICTS



(P) PARK

PRD / PUD DISTRICTS

Use of PUD/PRD Zoning to Parkland Dedication and Development

As discussed in Chapter 5, *Housing and Neighborhoods* within Table 5.1, *Zoning Districts that Allow for Residential Uses*, PRD and PUD districts comprise 24 percent of land zoned for residential uses within the City of Murfreesboro.

While the majority of vacant, residentially zoned land is in the PRD and PUD districts, this provides an opportunity for the City to capitalize on the contractual-style of development agreements within these residential districts to implement tools, such as parkland dedication, for the development of additional open space and land used for recreation purposes.

- Proportional credits for private parks and encumbered lands;
- Encourage the preservation of open space to enhance the community's livability, aesthetic quality, and natural beauty.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Within the parkland dedication ordinance, stipulate that that parkland dedication and subsequent improvements occur during the first phase of subdivision development.
2. Stipulate that parkland dedication fees-in-lieu are allocated to a specific fund to allow for community park dedication and subsequent fund allocation so that the City might have more opportunities to acquire larger parcels of land that benefit a larger service area rather than solely requiring dedication within the area associated with the specific residential development.
3. Include provisions and some degree of surety that will require an implementation timetable for the installation of parks to ensure that developers follow-through in their construction in a timely matter (i.e., certificate of occupancy may be deemed temporary until the park is determined to be sufficiently implemented).

Strategy 6.12: *Work with Rutherford County to establish a parkland dedication ordinance that would apply, at minimum, to residential development within Murfreesboro's Urban Growth Boundary.*

With ongoing residential development in the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), it will become increasingly important that Rutherford County partners with the City in the provision of parks within the UGB, including land acquisition, development, operation and maintenance of new facilities, so as not to overburden existing parks and new parks with Murfreesboro's City limits.

Strategy 6.13: *Consider requiring a Parkland Dedication Ordinance that includes Fees-in-Lieu as an option in PRD and PUD zoning districts.*

The use of planned residential development (PRD) and planned unit development (PUD) zoning districts should be considered by the City locations within Murfreesboro's current zoning framework for providing open space and land used for recreation purposes. This method has the advantage of providing public or private land for open space and neighborhood recreation facilities without cost to the public. Incentives could be incorporated into Murfreesboro's zoning ordinance to encourage a variety of development options, including cluster development and open space planning. This would allow for the dedication of land and/or the collection of money for the acquisition, development, and improvement of neighborhood, community and regional parks.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Consistent with the parkland dedication ordinance, establish parkland dedication, fees-in-lieu, and development fees, the amount of which should keep pace with the costs of parkland acquisition.

[Continued on page 6.37]

City of Murfreesboro : Legal Ability to Acquire and Develop Parks

When the projected growth of a city is expected to increase substantially it is important that there be an emphasis on the location, acquisition and development of neighborhood- and community-serving facilities so that properly located land doesn't run out and the cost of land is not too high.

The State of Tennessee grants the power of acquisition and disposal of property for the purpose of providing park and recreational facilities to the municipality. The following sections of Tennessee State Law authorize this:

- (TCA Sec. 7-34-104): "To construct, acquire by gift, purchase or exercise the right of eminent domain, reconstruct, improve, better or extend any public works within or without the municipality."
- (TCA Sec. 11-24-102): Local governments are authorized to "dedicate and set apart for use as playgrounds, recreation centers, and other recreational purposes, any lands or buildings or both owned or leased ... and not dedicated or devoted to another and inconsistent public use" and to acquire lands or buildings for such purposes "by gift, purchase, condemnation or lease."

In addition the Murfreesboro City Charter also authorizes the City:

- Section 4 (10): "To acquire or receive by purchase, gift, devise or otherwise, and to hold, maintain, improve, sell, lease, mortgage, pledge or otherwise, and to hold, maintain, improve, sell, lease, mortgage, pledge or otherwise dispose of property" for any lawful corporate or public purpose.
- Section 4(12): "To condemn property ... for present or future public use."

Case Study:

CITY OF AUSTIN, TX UPDATES ITS PARKLAND DEDICATION FEE

In August of 2014, The City of Austin provided recommendations on future parkland dedication requirements for the City.

The City of Austin's staff recommendations are driven by the desire to maintain the current level of park service for residents through access to pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and greenbelts that provide for connectivity within the City's park system. The City's existing code only requires land or a flat fee-in-lieu of land, but does not require a park development fee to cover the cost of improvements to the land or park amenities for public use.

The following are the parkland dedication requirement updates proposed by City staff:

Recommendation 1: *Land Requirement.*

Staff recommended the Park Land Dedication (PLD) code be amended to require 9.4 acres per 1,000 residents

- **Rationale:** To ensure the City of Austin maintains its current quality of life, staff recommends the PLD ordinance be amended to require a minimum or 9.4 acres per 1,000 people (instead of five acres per 1,000).

Recommendation 2: *Three-tiered Fee-in-Lieu of Land Structure.*

Staff recommended that Council approve a revised PLD fee structure that shifts the City's requirements for residential development from the outdated $650/ per dwelling unit flat-fee that applies regardless of the intensity of the development. Affordable dwelling units as certified by the Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department will remain excluded from this requirement. Staff recommends a three-tiered fee-in-lieu of land structure.

- **Rationale:** The average cost of land acquired by PARD is $39,000 per acre or $368 per resident. Best practices for PLD fee-in-lieu structure as described in John Crompton's model takes into account the impact to the local park system based on the level of intensity (or number of new people) of the residential project.
  - **Tier 1:** Low Density - with 2.8 people per household: $368 x 2.8 = $1,030
  - **Tier 2:** Medium Density - with 2.2. people per household: $368 x 2.2 = $810
  - **Tier 3:** High Density - with 1.7 people per household: $368 x 1.7 = $626

Recommendation 3: *Add a Three-Tiered Park Development Fee.*

Staff recommended that the City adopt a new three-tiered park development fee to cover the costs of making improvements to undeveloped land for public purposes, as follows:

- **Tier 1:** Low Density Fee-in-Lieu of Land $1,030 + a Park Development Fee of $521 = $1,551
- **Tier 2:** Medium Density Fee-in-Lieu of Land $810 + a Park Development Fee of $410 = $1,220
- **Tier 3:** High Density Fee-in-Lieu of Land $626 + a Park Development Fee of $317 = $943

- **Rationale:** The Austin park system is comprised of 8,201 acres of pocket and neighborhood parks and greenbelts which serves an estimated 865,504 residents. The current level of service for these parks equates to one park acre per 4,306 people. The average cost for developing these parks is $800,000 which includes the cost of park design and construction of site work, infrastructure, and basic park amenities including a pavilion, playscape, and picnic facilities.

Recommendation 4: *Incorporate the PLD fee structure into the annual fee adoption process.*

The PLD fee structure should be considered during Council's annual fee schedule adoption process. On an annual basis, PARD will determining the sufficiency of parkland by calculating the number of acres per 1,000 residents, the average cost of land acquisition and developing, during the prior year, then make PLD fee adjustment recommendations to Council for adoption.

- **Rationale:** An annual review process will ensure that the City of Austin's PLD fee structure keeps pace with the fluctuating costs of land acquisition and park development.

IMPACTS OF PROPOSED PLD FEE CHANGES

Should City Council adopt the recommendations detailed above, Austin will be better equipped to address the demands for parks as the City grows.

Source: Murfreesboro Greenway Facebook Page

MEETING YOUR NEEDS:

"We have the opportunity now to protect and conserve parks and open space. As we grow, the opportunities get smaller and smaller. The City should purchase land and should incentivize developers to allow greenspace and greenways."

Strategy 6.14: *Consider developing park planning zones that relate to an updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan for which parkland dedication funding can be allocated.*

As fees-in-lieu funding is collected from subdivision and site plan applications, funds can be allocated for specific park planning and improvements within the park planning zones so that there is some geographic bearing and relevance to funding origin and the parkland development is to be constructed.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to work with the Planning and Zoning Department to develop planning rationale and criteria through which to establish park planning zones.
2. Plan for a quarterly reporting process to share the available parkland dedication funds by planning zone and compare with the priorities within each planning zone.
3. Prioritize expenditures within each planning zone.
4. Continue to work with the City's GIS Department to input the park and recreation planning zones GIS shapefiles into the mapping function of the PRORAGIS™ system.

Strategy 6.15: *Develop an updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan.*

It is critical that the Parks and Recreation Department develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in order to ensure the continued improvement and development of park facilities and services for a planning horizon of generally 20 years. The Master Plan will provide a guide for officials making decisions about recreation needs and for citizens interested in the City's commitment to the provision of recreation services.

Through proactive planning and development of parks and recreation facilities, the City can budget needed funds over a period of time and develop a planned program of facility renovation and expansion.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Within the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), allocate funding for the Parks Master Plan.

Strategy 6.16: *Exercise fiscal responsibility and prudence in all financial and business transactions with respect to parkland acquisition, development, operations and maintenance.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to pursue revenues from public and private sources for parkland acquisition, recreation programs, and development of cultural arts programs.
2. Continue to partner with other agencies and organizations to more efficiently provide services, facilities, and programs.
3. Continue to regularly review and update the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the City's parks and recreation funding to be sure revenue expectations are met and guiding principles are followed.
4. Continue to apply for funding from private foundations or other granting entities.
5. Continue to pursue corporate/business/civic organization sponsorship to help fund programs and facilities.

[Continued on page 6.38]

NRPA's Proragis

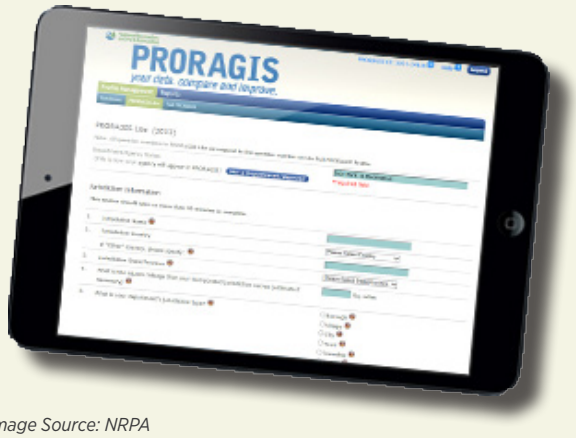


Image Source: NRPA

PRORAGIS™, which stands for *Park and Recreation Operating Ratio and GIS* system, is a tool intended to help agencies analyze and compare their performance and facilities to other similar agencies across the country.

Since its launch in 2010, the National Recreation and Park Administration (NRPA) has worked hard to get all park and recreation agencies to utilize the tool to move beyond what was previously being used as a "one size fits all" comparison between agencies. Historically, park and recreation professionals simply compared themselves using a national benchmarking standard commonly found in most park plans. These level of service recommendations came directly from the *National Park, Recreation and Open Space Standards* which was published by NRPA and used from 1971 to 1995.

6. Continue to conserve community resources to the greatest practicable extent through cooperation with other local organizations and agencies.

Murfreesboro's Natural Resources

Murfreesboro is rich with natural resources. The City is home to wetlands, a backcountry wilderness center, the Stones River and a bountiful canopy of trees. Significant wetlands within the City include:

- Murfree's Spring Wetland;
- Maney Spring Wetlands at Oaklands Historic House Museum;
- Richard Siegel Wetlands; and
- Nickajack Trace and Black Fox Wetland.

These natural features contribute to the character of the community and are a source of recreation and pride. Preservation and protection of these areas is of utmost importance for the purposes of conservation, education, and sustainability.

Stones River

Stones River is a major stream of the eastern portion of Tennessee's Nashville Basin region. The river is named after explorer and longhunter Uriah Stone, who navigated the river in 1767.

The Stones River is composed of three major forks: the West, Middle, and East forks. The West Fork runs just west of Downtown Murfreesboro. Northwest of the City along the West Fork is the Stones River National Battlefield, site of the Battle of Stones River.

"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

-Albert Einstein

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure is the practice of using nature and natural systems to support ecological and functional systems within a controlled, urban environment. Just as communities need to upgrade and expand their built infrastructure of roads, sewers, and utilities, they also need to upgrade and expand their green infrastructure, the interconnected system of green spaces that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions, sustains clean air and water, and provides a wide array of benefits to people and wildlife. Green infrastructure is a community's natural life support system, the ecological framework needed for environmental and economic stability.

In their role as green infrastructure, parks and open space are a community necessity. By planning and managing urban parks as parts of an interconnected green space system, cities can reduce flood control and stormwater management costs. Parks can also protect biological diversity and preserve essential ecological function while serving as a place for recreation and civic engagement.

According to The City Parks Forum, a program of the American Planning Association (APA) and funded by the Wallace Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, there are four key points surrounding green infrastructure. These points include:

- **Key Point #1:** Creating an interconnected system of parks and open space is manifestly more beneficial than creating parks in isolation.
- **Key Point #2:** Cities can use parks to help preserve essential ecological functions and to protect biodiversity.
- **Key Point #3:** When planned as part of a system of green infrastructure, parks can help shape urban form and buffer incompatible uses.
- **Key Point #4:** Cities can use parks to reduce public costs for stormwater management, flood control, transportation, and other aspects of built infrastructure.

[Continued on page 6.42]

Source: Valuing Ecosystem Services: Capturing the True Value of Nature's Capital. USDA; US Forest Service.

"No single park, no matter how large and how well designed, would provide citizens with the beneficial influences of nature; instead parks need to be linked to one another and to surrounding residential neighborhoods"

- Frederick Law Olmsted

Bridge Crossing the Stones River
Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative

Green Infrastructure

Planners' understanding of best environmental practices are typically siloed within environmental, social and economic "solutions." Rarely are complex issues approached from an integrated, systems-oriented perspective. Green infrastructure offers an alternative to this narrow approach – a way of not only tackling specific challenges head on, but of realizing multiple secondary benefits at the same time. It is through this integrated approach that the full ecological potential of landscape systems will be harnessed. By considering the widest range of functions a resource can perform simultaneously, green infrastructure can enhance the primary use of the land and unlock the greatest number of benefits.

Green Infrastructure refers to a strategically planned and managed network of wilderness, parks, greenways, conservation easements, working lands and sites that intersperse and connect rural areas, towns, and cities.

When appropriately planned, designed and managed green infrastructure can function to provide an array of interrelated benefits and ecosystem services. Green infrastructure has conservation value that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for communities and people. It is our natural life support system.[1]

- **As open space**, green infrastructure provides recreational opportunities and places for people to enjoy being outside.
- **As a system of greenways**, green infrastructure can provide corridors for active transportation, increased biodiversity, and an effective means to manage storm water.
- **As a forest canopy**, green infrastructure offers protection from the harmful effects from urban heat islands by providing shade and cooling, as well as improved air quality.

The simultaneous, sustainable and multi-functional benefits of green infrastructure cannot be underestimated. Beyond being potentially more cost-effective and capable of meeting the environmental, social and economic objectives than conventional 'gray' infrastructure; green infrastructure, as a natural, ecosystem service-providing infrastructure, can help raise the adaptive capacity and urban resilience of our regions, communities, neighborhoods and individuals.

SCALES AND DENSITIES

Green Infrastructure should be strategically preserved, planned, designed and managed at a range of spatial scales to provide useable space while supporting natural and ecological processes.

- **At the regional scale,** planning and managing green infrastructure systems should focus on retaining and expanding areas of continuous and unfragmented natural resources, such as woodlands, wetlands and prairies; as well as large expanses of agricultural lands, to ensure that prime farmland remains connected and viable. Green infrastructure systems should also be planned in conjunction with regional transportation infrastructure and planned growth areas. Because communities are the focus of growth they stand to benefit the most from green infrastructure.
- **At the local government scale**, green infrastructure plans should identify land for preservation and management ahead of future development. The development of greenways between large areas of natural resources is perhaps best applied at the local government or community level. Indeed, increasing ecological carrying capacity can really only happen in cities, as the eco-productivity of natural areas cannot be increased without destroying their evolutionary logic.[2]
- **At the district and neighborhood scales**, green infrastructure techniques mimic natural processes that can reduce the need and costs for certain gray infrastructure.[3] When stormwater runoff is diverted from a conventional stormwater system to areas where water can be evaporated, infiltrated, or captured and reused, water quality is improved.

1 Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, 2004)

2 Birkeland, 2014.

3 Heartlands Conservancy, 2013

- **At the site scale**, the application of low-impact development strategies, tools and techniques can slow stormwater runoff so it does not overload conventional stormwater drainage systems. Green roofs and blue roofs can detain stormwater runoff, increase the longevity of roofing materials by reducing thermal shock, and reduce cooling costs. Rain gardens, vegetated swales, and other forms of micro-detention can be effective in restoring a site's pre-development hydrology.

IDENTITY AND PLACE

Green infrastructure, as embodied in a community's parks, gathering places and open space networks enhances a city's form, sense of place and identity; and provides a system of spaces and places through which people can connect with nature. The cultural connection to place helps to shape a community's outlook on the broader landscape and forges bonds between people and the physical dimensions of their community. Despite this understanding of people and place, the current planning and design paradigm through which communities are designed leads to the development of increasingly homogeneous environments and the disconnection and disruption of people with the landscape, its open spaces and ecosystem services.[4] Resilience and sustainability are ultimately determined by the way people choose to live. Communities and neighborhoods must be designed to engender a sense of place and identity so as to inspire within people a renewed connection with the landscapes within which they live.

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Within APA PAS Report No. 571, *Green Infrastructure: A Landscape Approach*. Rouse and Bunster-Ossa (2013) identify six principles that inform the planning and design of green infrastructure:

1. **Multi-functionality.** Multi-functionality refers to the multiple overlapping functions and ecosystem services that green infrastructure provides, spanning multiple systems over a range of spatial scales. In urban areas where land is valuable and the challenges are often the greatest, it is critical that green space is of high quality and achieves multiple functions.[5]
2. **Connectivity.** Connectivity underscores the importance of green infrastructure as a physically connected network of systems and spaces. Well-connected green infrastructure resources create infrastructure that is adaptive and resilient to changes in climate, such as dramatic increases in rainfall. Physical connections make the most impact, often by creating stepping stones that enable biodiversity migration and connect places with active transportation routes.[6] A connected green infrastructure system provides greater ecosystem service benefits such as improved air and water quality, removal of pollutants and infiltration of stormwater.[7]
3. **Habitability.** Habitability connotes the degree to which green infrastructure provides critical aspects of habitat and home for multiple species of plants and animals; and a restorative place within which humans can recreate and be healthy. Networks of high-quality biological habitats also provide valuable links for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species in the wider environment.[8]
4. **Resiliency.** Resiliency refers to green infrastructure's ability to provide protection against a shifting environmental baseline; whether it functions as a buffering mechanism against increased storm events within coastal areas; or whether it is a system of micro-detention basins that trap stormwater runoff and provide a natural means of irrigating street trees.
5. **Identity.** Identity describes the sense of being associated with a specific physiographic region that is composed of a unique community of flora and fauna, the character of which contributes to a heightened sense of aesthetic awareness that one is within and part of a larger place. With landscapes, every environmental detail is a partial disclosure of the larger environment. Within the biotic community there are indicator species – plants and animals from whose presence in a particular area can be deduced a spectrum of physical conditions that infer the ecological context of the place.
6. **Return on Investment.** Return on Investment is a principle that reminds planners and designers that the utilization of the ecosystem services provided by green infrastructure must not only be communicated to raise awareness, but translated into financial terms and justified based on the conservation of capital and other resources. Planners, designers and managers must demonstrate the contribution green infrastructure using the tools of planning policy and metrics of economic value to quantifiably validate what normally is understood using common sense.

4 Selman, 2012
5 CIWEM, 2010
6 Landscape Institute, 2013
7 Heartlands Conservancy, 2013
8 CIWEM, 2010

Ecosystem Services

Trees and forests are valued for basic goods, such as food and wood fiber, but they deliver important services that are often perceived to be free and limitless - air and water purification, flood and climate regulation, biodiversity, and scenic landscapes are just a few. Taken for granted as public benefits, ecosystem services lack a formal market and are traditionally absent from society's balance sheet.[1]

Ecosystem services make up our natural life support system and are a form of natural capital.

Like financial capital, manufactured capital, and human capital, natural capital is a requisite for economic progress and human welfare (Hawken, et al., 1999). Accounting for natural assets requires measuring the stocks and flows of ecosystem services and making sure the people who rely on these assets know their value and the cost of losing them. Understanding the extent to which a forested landscape purifies the air or moderates coastal flooding, for example, can lend priority to regional investments in land management and conservation.

Valuing ecosystem services presents an opportunity to:

- Promote public awareness of the importance of forests, wetlands, and grasslands;
- Provide an economic incentive for private landowners to own and sustainability manage forests and rangelands; and
- Encourage ecological restoration and support the partnerships and innovative solutions needed to finance restoration activities.

Resting on the concept of sustainability, ecosystem management is described as the optimum integration of human needs and requirements, the ecological potential of a landscape, and economic and technical considerations (Jensen and Everett 1994, Zonneveld 1988). The main principle, then, is to sustain the integrity of ecosystems (i.e., ecosystem functions, composition, and structure) for future generations while providing immediate goods and services to an increasingly diverse public (Jensen and Everett, 1994; Overbay, 1992).

Linking parks, greenways, river corridors, and other natural and restored lands together to create an interconnected green space system provides far greater benefits for people, wildlife, and the economy. Just as it is necessary to design and construct road networks and other built infrastructure in advance of metropolitan growth, it is also important to plan and protect urban green infrastructure as a city grows. In addition, when managed to maintain and restore natural ecological communities, urban parks can help protect the biological diversity of local plants and animals. When connected strategically with riparian areas, wetlands, and other urban green spaces, the ecological value can far exceed the value of any one park.

Perhaps the greatest value of an interconnected green space system is the financial benefit that may be gained when green infrastructure reduces the need for built infrastructure. When designed to include stream networks, wetlands, and other low-lying areas, a city's green space system can provide numerous stormwater management benefits, including storing, carrying, and filtering storm runoff. By thinking of parks as green infrastructure, communities can better understand that parks and other green spaces are a basic necessity that should be planned and developed as an integrated system.

Strategy 6.17: *Work to preserve Murfreesboro's natural resources, conserve energy, and protect and enhance the environment.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to provide for preservation and conservation of open space including wetlands, floodplains, streams and water bodies, woodlands, and natural areas; using conservation easements, transfer of development rights, and other legal mechanisms typically utilized for land conservation, including outright land acquisition of priority open space areas.
2. Continue to consider energy efficiency and environmentally sustainable design (USGBC LEED™ certification standards) when planning, developing, and purchasing park equipment and supplies.
3. Continue to spearhead, promote and participate in various recycling efforts and programs.
4. Continue to consider adopting conscientious land management practices like the use of natural composting, environmentally safe fertilizers and pesticides, and the use of "no-mow" zones around resource features.

[Continued on page 6.44]

Ecotourism: Economic and Conservation Benefits

Ecotourism has become a popular activity in natural areas around the world through providing opportunities for visitors to experience beautiful wonders of nature and culture as well as to learn about the importance of environmental conservation and local cultures. The definition of "ecotourism," as adopted in 1996 by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), is: "Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples."

According to the Nature Conservancy, ecotourism is a tool to accrue benefits for both local people and the protected area, making it an ideal part of a sustainable development strategy where natural resources can be used as tourism attractions without causing harm to the natural area. An ecotourism initiative must have the following aspects in order to be successful:

- have a low impact upon a protected area's natural resources
- involve stakeholders (individuals, communities, eco-tourists, tour operators and government institutions) in the planning, development, implementation and monitoring phases;
- respect local cultures and traditions;
- generate sustainable and equitable income for local communities and for as many other stakeholders as possible;
- generate income for protected area conservation; and
- educate all stakeholders about their role in conservation. [1]

Ecotourism has the opportunity to boost local, regional and national economies. Visitors require numerous goods and services while traveling, including hotels, restaurants, shops, guide services and transportation systems - thus, a multitude of businesses receive direct benefits from ecotourism. Ecotourism has the potential to reduce the threats posed by conventional tourism to natural areas and communities via income generation for: conservation, local enterprise and employment, cultural exchange, environmental education, protected area justification and visitor appreciation. Ecotourism requires rigorous planning and management to realize this potential and to become successful.

Ecotourism can be defined as: "Environmentally responsible travel and visitation to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples."

- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 1996

[1] Drumm, Andy and Alan Moore (2002). Ecotourism Development: A Manual for Conservation Planners and Managers (Vol. 1). The Nature Conservancy, Arlington, VA.

Urban Trees and Forests

Urban forests are an integral part of community ecosystems, whose numerous elements, including people, animals, buildings, infrastructure, water and air, interact to significantly affect the quality of urban life.

Urban forest services and benefits include, but are not limited to:

- **Local Climate and Energy Use:** trees influence thermal comfort, energy use, and air quality by providing shade, transpiring moisture, and reducing wind speeds.
- **Air Quality:** Trees improve air quality by lowering air temperatures, altering emissions from building energy use and other sources, and removing air pollutants through their transpiration.
- **Water Flow and Quality:** Trees and soils improve water quality and reduce the need for costly stormwater infrastructure and treatment by intercepting and retaining or slowing the flow of precipitation reaching the ground.
- **Noise Abatement:** Properly designed plantings of trees and shrubs can significantly reduce noise.
- **Wildlife and Biodiversity:** Urban forests help create and enhance animal and plant habitats and can act as "reservoirs" for endangered species.
- **Soil Quality:** Trees and other plants help remediate soils at landfills and other contaminated sites by adsorbing, transforming, and containing a number of contaminants.
- **Real Estate and Business:** Landscaping with trees - in yards, in parks and greenways, along streets, and in shopping centers - can increase property values and commercial benefits.
- **Individual Well-being and Public Health:** The presence of urban trees and forests can make the urban environment a more aesthetic, pleasant, and emotionally satisfying place in which to live, work and spend leisure time.

Source: USDA

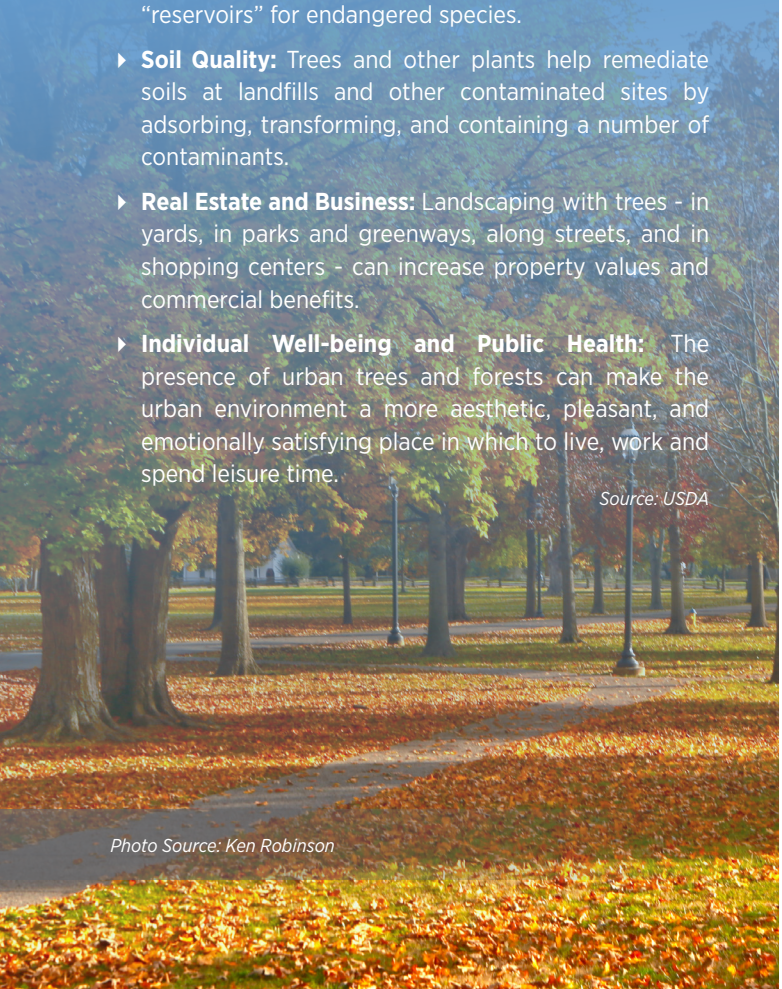


Photo Source: Ken Robinson

Strategy 6.18: *Implement strategies for parks and trails to improve conservation, stormwater management, and hazard mitigation.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to design parks and trails to minimize areas with unstable embankments and soils.
2. Promote a diverse, unbroken urban tree canopy particularly along park boundaries.
3. Maintain urban forest canopy.
4. Continue to slope trails away from stream banks and, where possible, establish shallow swales along the uphill shoulder;
5. Utilize native plants that do not require fertilizer.

STRATEGY 6.19: *Protect and sustain natural areas, resource features, and environmentally sensitive lands.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Create a master gardener/master naturalist program and solicit their volunteer assistance in designing, creating, and managing eco-gardens and outdoor environmental classrooms.

Create expanded opportunities for environmental outings by offering facilities and programs to promote nature education, habitat observance, and eco-tourism.

STRATEGY 6.20: *Continue to utilize bio-engineering techniques for stream bank stabilization in Murfreesboro's parks and along its greenway system.*

As discussed within Chapter 2, *Growth Capacity and Infrastructure*, to preserve water quality within the City's numerous streams, rivers and water bodies it is extremely important to preserve the riparian corridors within which the streams flow, so as to reduce the impact of non-point source pollution runoff and erosion.

Stream and river embankment stabilization is another important method of reducing harmful effects of erosion and sedimentation and preserving water quality. Employing bio-engineering techniques enhance riparian habitat and avoid costly bulkheading and embankment cladding, not to mention preserving natural character. Bioengineering techniques reduce flow velocities and scour by increasing sediment deposition along the shoreline. Bio-engineering includes planting vegetation that forms dense mats of flexible stems, such as willow (*Salix nigra*) to protect or rehabilitate eroded stream banks. Stream bank protection using vegetation is probably the most commonly used practice, particularly in small tributaries. Structural practices, both direct and indirect, protect or rehabilitate eroded stream banks and are usually implemented in combination to provide

[Continued on page 6.46]

Source: Murfreesboro Greenway Facebook Page

There are approximately 100 acres of wetland development in Mufreesboro. Oaklands Wetland Restoration Project has planted over 100 different species of trees and plants that feature all the trees of Tennessee.

- Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department: Strategic Action Plan 2010-2015

Importance of Wetlands

Until only recently has the full importance of wetlands function and performance become more fully understood. Far from being useless, disease-ridden places, wetlands provide values that no other ecosystem can, including:

- Natural water quality improvement;
- Habitat for flora and fauna;
- Flood protection;
- Shoreline erosion control; and
- Opportunities for recreation and aesthetic appreciation.

WATER QUALITY AND HYDROLOGY

Wetlands have important filtering capabilities for intercepting surface-water runoff from higher dry land before the runoff reaches open water. As the runoff water passes through, wetlands retain excess nutrients and some pollutants, and reduce sediment that would clog waterways and affect fish and amphibian egg development. In performing this filtering function, wetlands can provide significant cost savings. For example, a 1990 study showed that, without the Congaree Bottomland Hardwood Swamp in South Carolina, the area would require a $5 million waste water treatment plant.

FLOOD PROTECTION

Wetlands function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water, rain, snowmelt, groundwater and flood waters. Trees, root mats and other wetland vegetation also slow the speed of floodwaters. This combined water storage and braking action lowers flood heights and reduces erosion.

Wetlands within and downstream of urban areas are particularly valuable, counteracting the greatly increased rate and volume of surface-water runoff from pavement and buildings.

RECREATION AND AESTHETICS

Wetlands have recreational, historical, scientific, and cultural values. More than half of all U.S. adults (98 million) hunt, fish, birdwatch or photograph birdlife. They spend a total of $59.5 billion annually.

Source: EPA

stability to the stream system. Indirect methods include grade control structures or hydraulic barriers installed across streams to stabilize the channel and control upstream degradation.

Vegetative methods should be used in conjunction with or over structural methods because vegetation is relatively easy to establish and maintain, is visually attractive, and is the only streambank stabilization method that can repair itself when damaged. Other advantages to using vegetative erosion control over structural control include increased pollutant attenuation and nutrient uptake capacity, habitat for fish and wildlife, and added cultural resources. Additionally, hardening the banks of streams and rivers with shoreline stabilization protection such as stone riprap revetments can accelerate the movement of surface water and pollutants from upstream, thus degrading water quality in depositional areas downstream.

Strategy 6.21: *Coordinate Rover routes with park locations so that residents can utilize public transportation to access the City's parks.*

Strategy 6.22: *Support the goals of Every Child Outdoors Tennessee (ECO) to promote and support opportunities that encourage children to engage with and experience the outdoors.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to promote the tenets of the Tennessee Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights: Every child, before entering high school, should have the opportunity to walk in the woods, play outside, explore nature, watch wildlife, grow a garden, splash in the water, camp under the stars, learn to swim, climb a tree, go fishing, fly a kite and visit a farm.
2. Work closely with ECO to support and accomplish goals and objectives of "Connecting Children and Families with Nature."

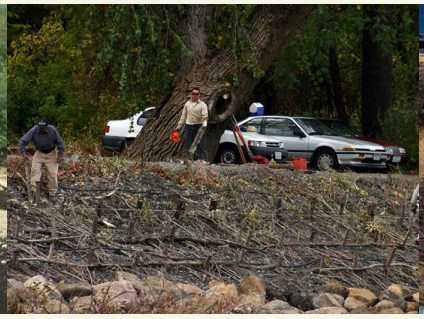
Bio-engineering Techniques

Employ the following bio-engineering and other non-structural controls over structural controls to restore damaged habitat and protect shoreline and stream bank erosion:

Live Staking

Brush Layering

Brush Mattressing



Live Cribwalls

Source: F.X. Browne, Inc.

- **Live Staking** involves the insertion and tamping of live, rootable vegetative cuttings into the ground.
- **Live Fascines** are long bundles of branch cuttings bound together into sausage-like structures. When cut from appropriate species and properly installed, they will root and immediately begin to stabilize slopes.
- **Brush Layering** consists of placing live branch cuttings in small benches excavated into the slope. The portions of the brush that protrude from the slope face assist in retarding runoff and reducing surface erosion.
- **Brush Mattressing** involves digging a slight depression on the bank and creating a mat or mattress from woven wire or single strands of wire and live, freshly cut branches from sprouting trees or shrubs.
- **Branch Packing** consists of alternating layers of live branch cuttings and compacted backfill to repair small localized slumps and holes in slopes.
- **Joint Planting** involves planting live cuttings of rootable plant material into soil between the joints or open spaces in rocks that have previously been placed on a slope.
- **Live Cribwalls** consist of a hollow, box-like interlocking arrangement of untreated log or timber members. The structure is filled with suitable backfill material and layers of live branch cuttings, which root inside the crib structure and extend into the slope.

Greenways, Blueways, and Bikeways Master Plan

In 2011, the City of Murfreesboro initiated the development of the *Greenways, Blueways, and Bikeways Master Plan,* to help identify and coordinate implementable improvements in recreation and non-motorized transportation over the next 25 years. This plan represents a joint effort of the associated City Departments which oversee the planning, design and maintenance of these facilities working closely with a Study Advisory Committee consisting of various local stakeholder interests. The Master Plan was also informed through the input of Murfreesboro's residents. The participant-formed objectives of this plan find common ground in two emphasis areas of contemporary American cities: 1) health/recreation; and 2) transportation.

In the development of this plan and in its implementation in the years ahead, the question should continually be asked, "how will our actions progress one or more of these objectives to the advantage of Murfreesboro?"

A total of 67 miles of off-road trails and 24 new trailheads have been recommended for development over the next 25 years, as referenced in Table 6.9, *Types and Lengths of Recommended Greenways, Blueways, and Bikeways Facilities*.

Strategy 6.23: *Utilize future planned extensions of the Murfreesboro Greenways system to link neighborhoods with schools and commercial centers.*

When planning future greenway and recreational trail extension, refer to Chapter 2, *Growth Capacity and Infrastructure, and utilize* Map 2.3*, Environmental Constraints, and* Map 2.4*, Land Suitable for Development,* to identify environmental corridors that may not be suitable for conventional residential, commercial or institutional development, but may be suitable for recreational development.

Strategy 6.24: *Continue the Lytle Creek Greenway from Cannonsburgh Village to the Discovery Center at Murfree's Spring and beyond to the Patterson Park Community Center.*

As depicted in Figure 6.6, *Proposed Lytle Creek Greenway Extension*, and described in Chapter 2, *Growth Capacity and Infrastructure*, with the reconstruction to the 1,880 foot long Town Creek box culvert, which runs roughly parallel to Broad Street, there is an opportunity to daylight Town Creek, from Murfree's Spring to Lytle Creek, and create a pedestrian promenade from Cannonsburgh Village and the Lytle Creek Greenway Trailhead to the Murfree's Spring Discovery Center and beyond to Patterson Park Community Center.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Seek capital and technical partnerships with the U.S. National Park Service' Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program, the Rutherford County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and local private foundations to prepare a comprehensive, mixed-use redevelopment program for the entire Murfreesboro Bottoms area, utilizing the restored Town Creek and adjacent promenade as a central amenity.

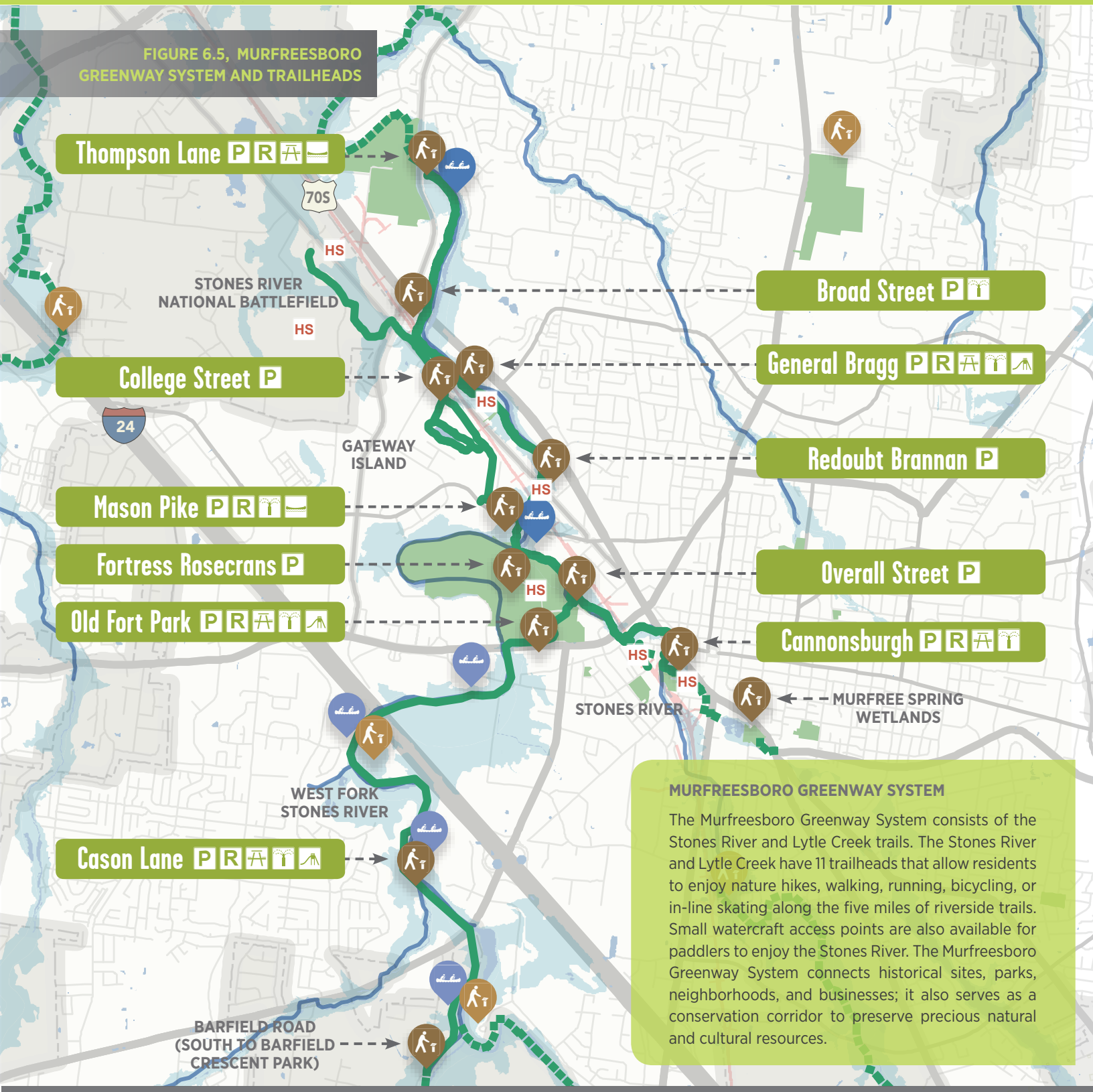
TABLE 6.9, TYPES AND LENGTHS OF RECOMMENDED AND GREENWAYS, BLUEWAYS, AND BIKEWAYS FACILITIES

Type of Recommended Facility	Length (miles)
Greenways and Greenway Connectors	67.3
Multi-Use Paths	36.3
Bicycle Lanes	20.2
Bicycle Routes	50.0
TOTAL	**173.8**

Source: Murfreesboro's Greenways, Blueways, and Bikeways Master Plan

[Continued on page 6.52]

FIGURE 6.5, MURFREESBORO GREENWAY SYSTEM AND TRAILHEADS



MURFREESBORO GREENWAY SYSTEM

The Murfreesboro Greenway System consists of the Stones River and Lytle Creek trails. The Stones River and Lytle Creek have 11 trailheads that allow residents to enjoy nature hikes, walking, running, bicycling, or in-line skating along the five miles of riverside trails. Small watercraft access points are also available for paddlers to enjoy the Stones River. The Murfreesboro Greenway System connects historical sites, parks, neighborhoods, and businesses; it also serves as a conservation corridor to preserve precious natural and cultural resources.

- P PARKING
- R RESTROOM
- PICNIC AREA
- WATER FOUNTAIN
- PLAYGROUND
- CANOE ACCESS
- HS HISTORICAL SITE
- EXISTING TRAILHEAD
- PROPOSED TRAILHEAD
- EXISTING BLUEWAY ACCESS
- PROPOSED BLUEWAY ACCESS

FIGURE 6.6, PROPOSED LYTLE CREEK GREENWAY EXTENSION

The advantages gained by communities that have comprehensive, safe, and well-maintained facilities for recreation and transportation are immense.

Interconnected Park Systems Case Study: Houston

Park systems that are an interconnected network of parks, greenways, river corridors, and other natural or restored lands provides benefits to the physical and emotional health of the population, to wildlife, to the economy, and to the environment.

Houston is an example of cities today that are investing in a park system that will benefit the community as well as re-envisioning transportation in the city. Several public agencies and private non-profit partners, including the City of Houston, the Harris County Flood Control District, and the Houston Parks Board, created the Bayou Greenways Initiative to utilize Houston's extensive natural bayou system as a means of stormwater management as well as a connected network of greenways and walking and biking trails. The Bayou Greenway system is designed to reduce flooding, promote healthy lifestyles, stimulate economic development, and create accessible parkland and outdoor recreation resources. Once complete the Bayou Greenway system will provide 1500 new acres of parkland and 80 miles of new trails within the city of Houston. Funding for the system is from several sources with the majority coming from private sector contributions raised by the Houston Parks Board as well as a bond referendum passed by Houston voters.

Source: SWA Group

Source: Buffalo Bayou Park

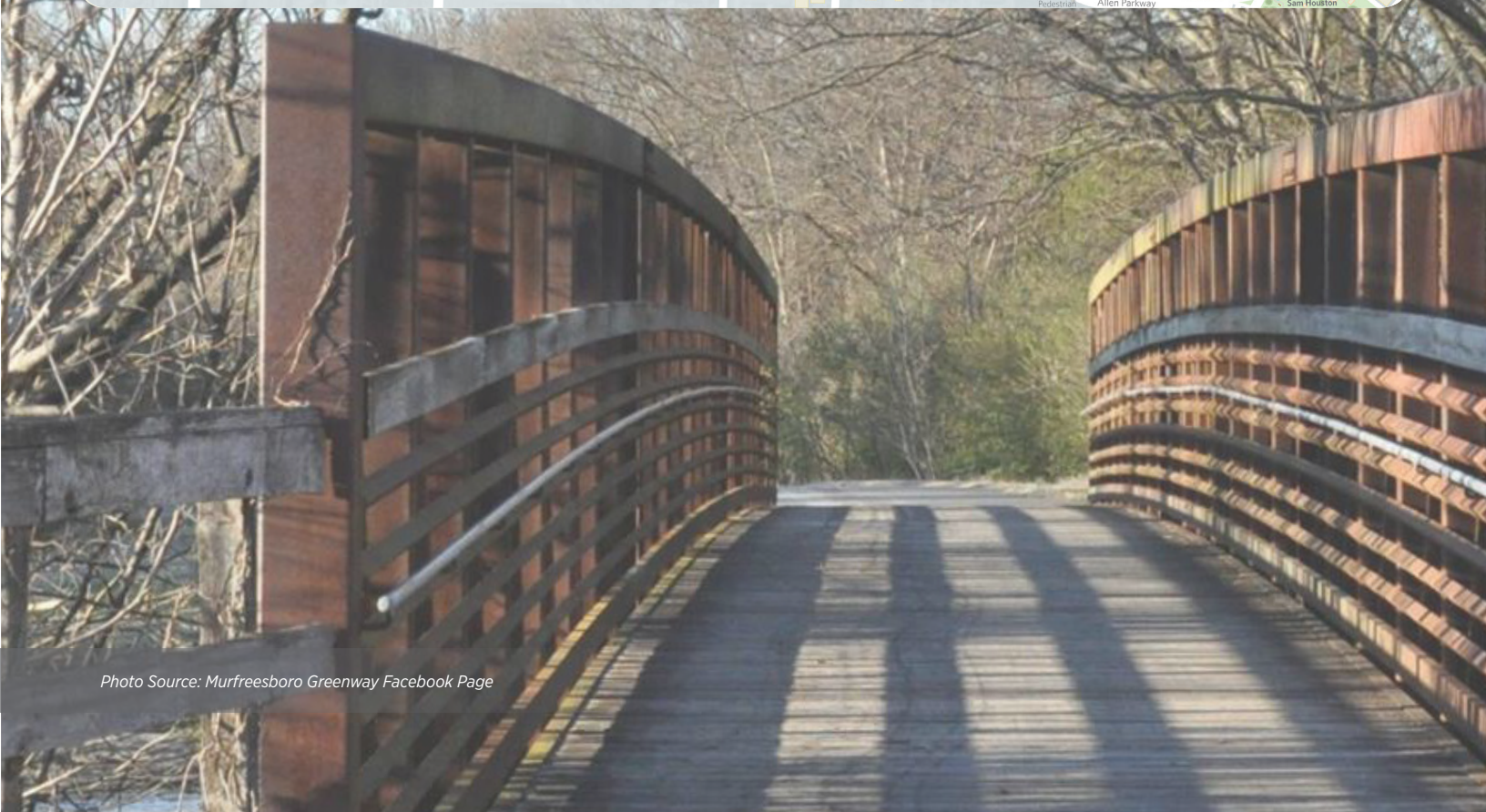
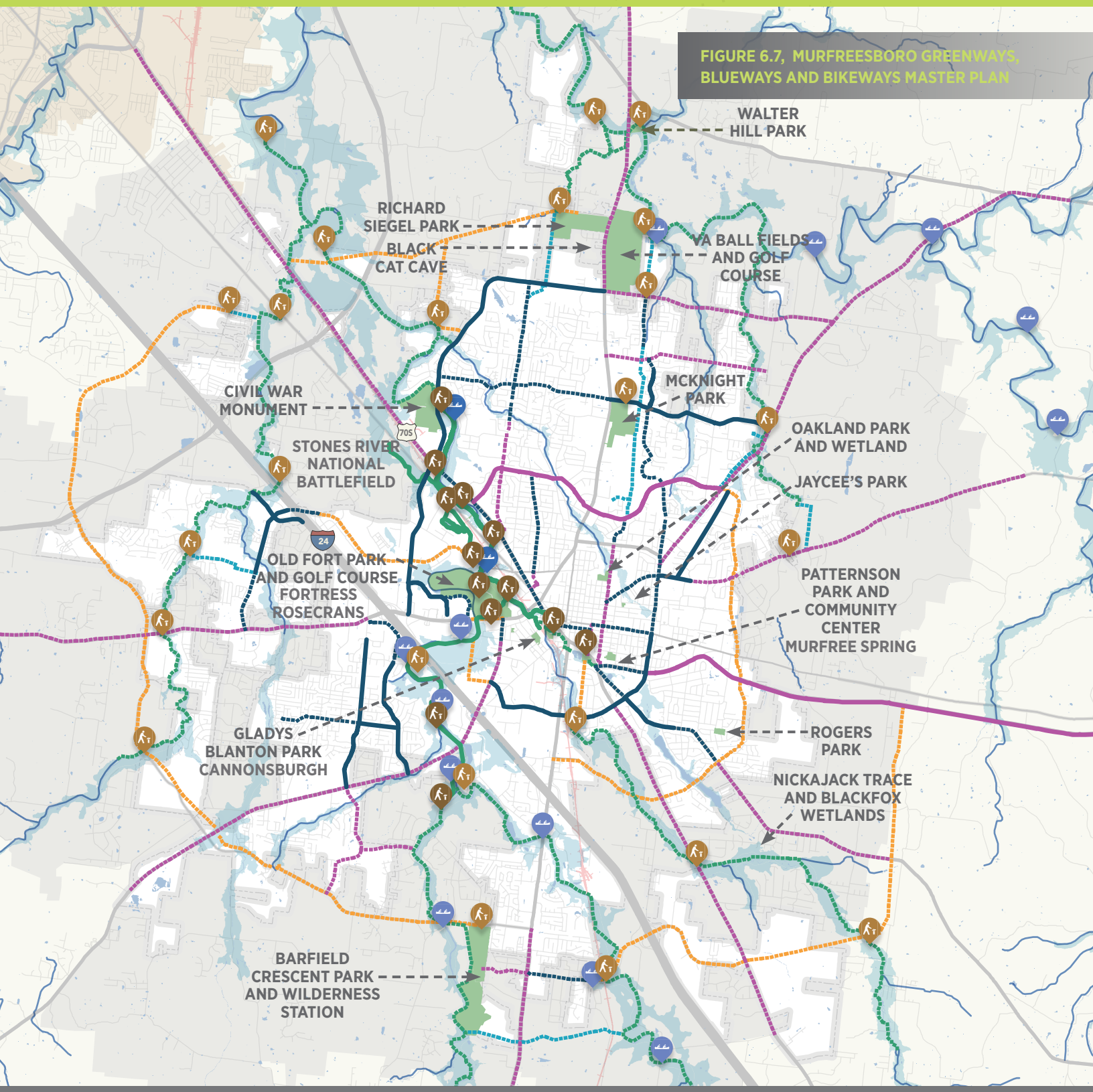


Photo Source: Murfreesboro Greenway Facebook Page

FIGURE 6.7, MURFREESBORO GREENWAYS, BLUEWAYS AND BIKEWAYS MASTER PLAN



EXISTING TRAILHEAD
PROPOSED TRAILHEAD
EXISTING BLUEWAY ACCESS
PROPOSED BLUEWAY ACCESS

EXISTING BIKE FACILITIES
BIKE LANE
BIKE ROUTE
GREENWAY

PROPOSED BIKE FACILITIES
BIKE LANE
BIKE ROUTE
GREENWAY CONNECTOR
MULTI-USE PATH
GREENWAY

Promotion and Preservation of Cultural and Historical Resources

For many, the definition of 'place,' is "space endowed with cultural meaning." The quote on page 1.1 of this Comprehensive Plan, states: "*The one commonality of great cities and 'cool' places to live is that they have great people with great ideas. And that's exactly what you will find in the City of Murfreesboro. The City is excited about our future, we are looking forward to moving into the next generation with you.*" The City self-identifies as, "still having many of the charms of old; yet, there is an energy, a youthfulness, and an excitement here that one may not find in many other places. Murfreesboro is not stagnant; rather, it is ever-evolving."

In order to sieze the next generation the City must embrace its ever-expanding and culturally diverse population, which is composed of multiple ethnicities and an array of family types, from individuals, to single parents, to a young couple with an aging parent. Preserving and promoting the historical and cultural resources of Murfreesboro benefits the community and region because it attracts and retains a sector of the population looking for a unique place. Indeed, Murfreesboro already has a strong sense of community and pride in its city.

Additionally, as discussed in Chapter 5, *Housing and Neighborhoods*, studies indicate that a growing sector of the population are young and staying single longer. This sector, often referred to as the "creative class," are looking for communities that are stimulating, diverse, dynamic places with high levels of cultural interplay and activity. They want multi-dimensional experiences, outdoor activities, and places that are authentic, unique and full of original experiences (refer to the "Creative Class" sidebar).

There are several, "original experiences," or historical and cultural assets, in Murfreesboro. Map 6.1, *Historical and Cultural Assets*, identify the historic residential districts, buildings and sites, as well as museums, performance art and multiple events and festivals.

In Chapter 1, *Planning Context*, the community profile found that Murfreesboro's population is relatively young and the majority of the population falls into various

CANNONSBURGH VILLAGE
Source: Friends of Cannonsburgh Village Facebook page

"Tapestry Segments" composed of a diverse group of young people who are active, work hard, and want to live in a variety of housing types (refer to Figure 1.8, *Median Age, 2014*; and Table 1.2, *Tapestry Segments, 2014*). Moreover, the community profile points out that, although Murfreesboro has the largest university as well as the highest college enrollment rate in Tennessee, the educational attainment percentage is average among the comparison communities. Educational attainment of a bachelor's degree or higher is a key factor in the creative class and significantly impacts the community's economic development potential. Figure 1.32, *Attainment of Bachelor's Degrees (2012)*, in Chapter 1, *Planning Context,* indicates that 24.4 percent of the Murfreesboro population has a Bachelor's degree.

Therefore, a key economic development strategy is to retain as many MTSU graduates as possible, since they are the largest source of potential employees in Middle Tennessee. In addition to creative people, creative businesses are increasingly attracted to communities that offer diverse cultural and recreational opportunities, because people that work for them want these assets and they will be more able to attract employees if they are based in these places. But what will it take to keep them here? How can the City project itself and orient future development so it caters to this class of young people; and in doing so, stimulates economic growth.

HISTORICAL RESOURCES

In Murfreesboro's 200+ year history, the City has experienced a lot of momentous occasions and severe challenges. Chapter 1, *Planning Context*, covers a brief history of Murfreesboro highlighting the City's past in agriculture, education, and war. Remnants of several of these major events in history can still be seen today within the natural and built environment. In Rutherford County there are 47 districts, sites, and buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, see Table 6.11, *National Register of Historic Places-listed Properties in Rutherford County*. Additionally, there are 25 Tennessee Century Farms in Rutherford County. The following is an overview of some of the more significant historic places in and around Murfreesboro.

[Continued on page 6.56]

Creative Class

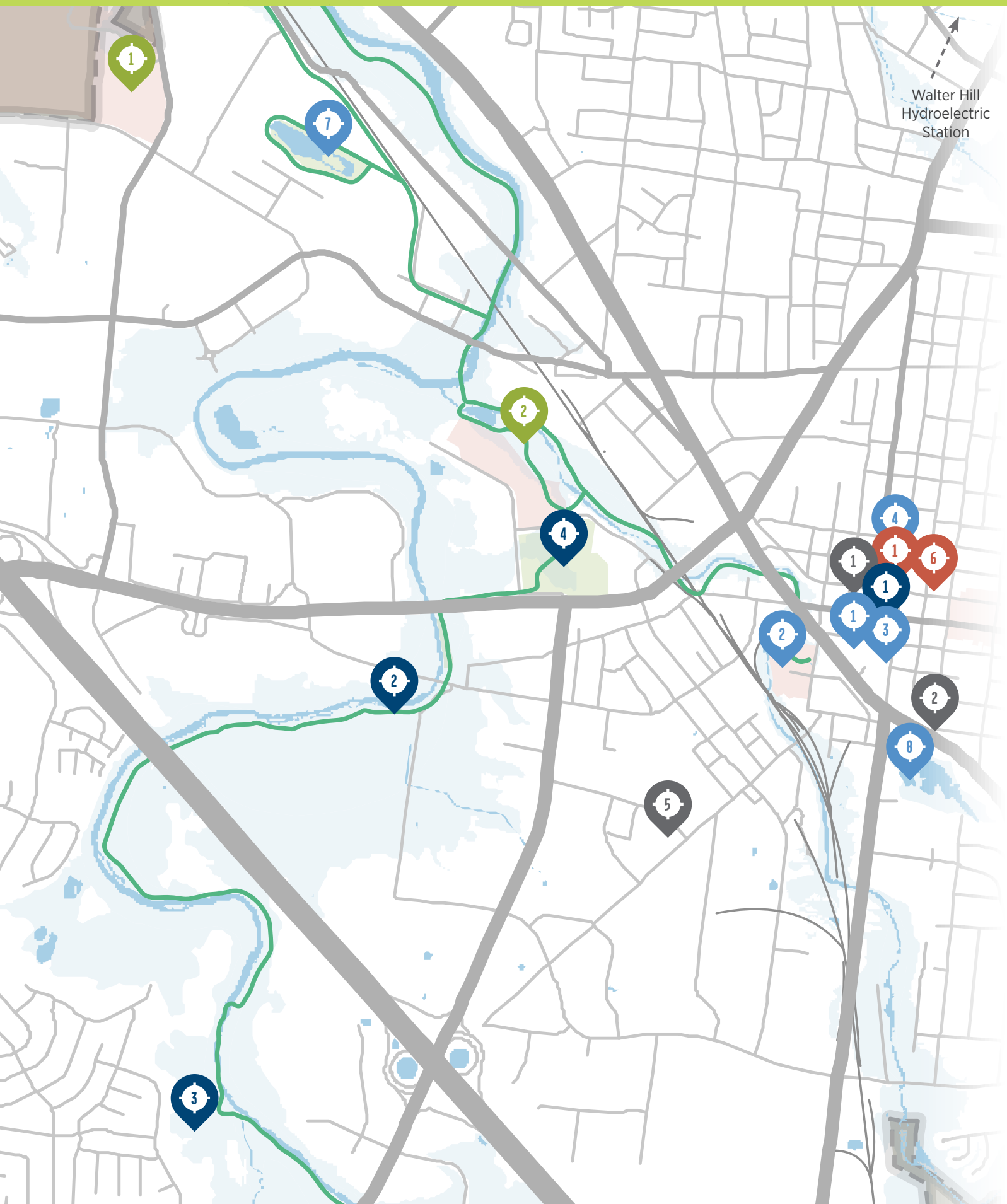
in various publications, including, *Rise of the Creative Class (*2002), Richard Florida, PhD., an American economist and social scientist (http://www.creativeclass.com), has identified a socioeconomic class, he refers to as the "creative class." Members of the creative class engage in work whose function is to "create meaningful new forms." Within the creative class, the super-creative core are people who produce things that are readily transferable and broadly useful. Scientists, engineers, university professors, poets, novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, designers, architects, as well as nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, and analysts are considered "creative professionals," who work in a wide range of knowledge-based occupations. These people engage in creative problem-solving. Florida states that a third of the American workforce makes up the creative class, or as he says, those people who are fortunate enough to be paid to use their creativity in their work.

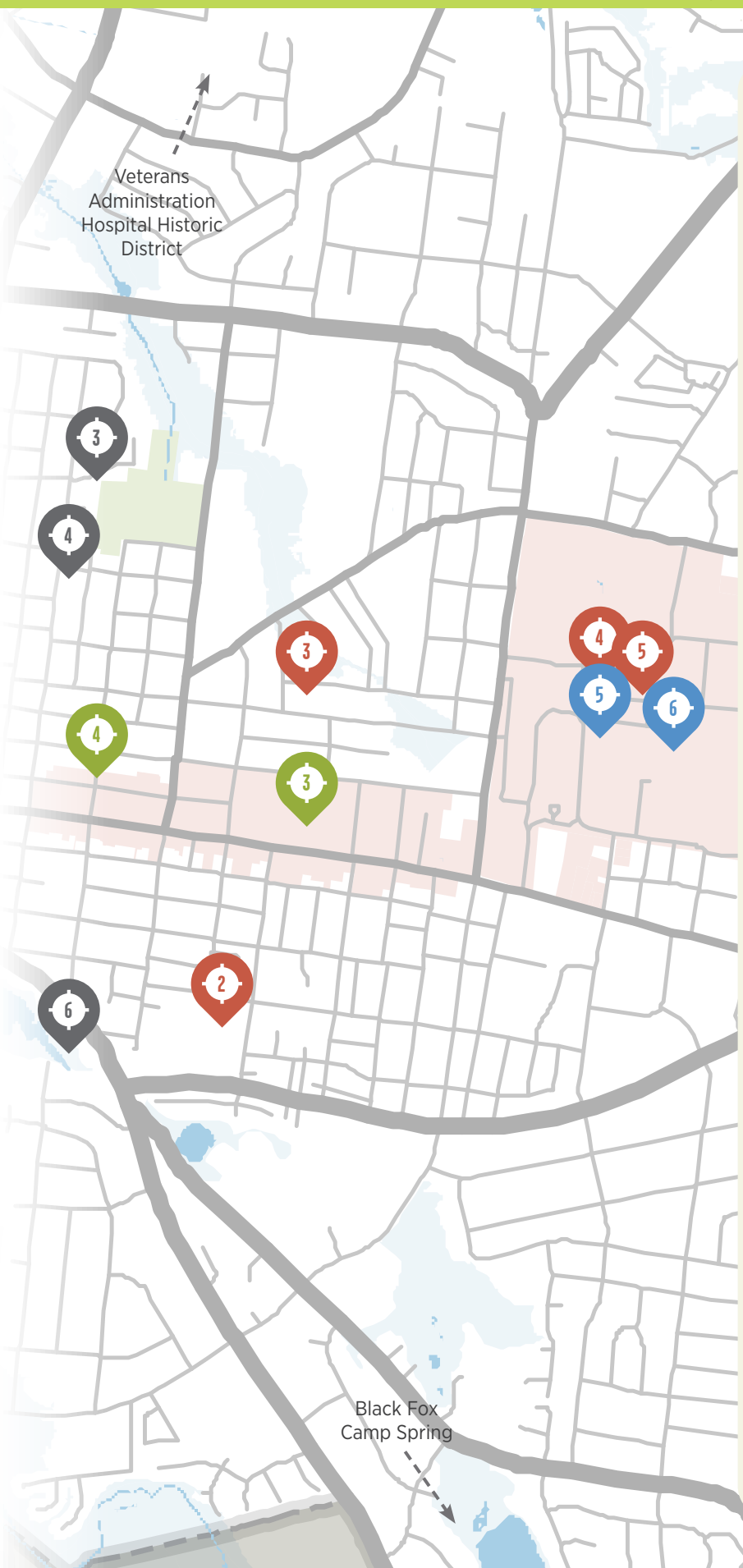
In Florida's publications he asks the question, "in a world where people are highly mobile, why do they choose some cities over others and for what reasons?" He discovered the creative class values the following characteristics of a city:

- high-quality, multi-dimensional, real experiences;
- active, participatory recreation;
- street-level culture of cafes, sidewalk musicians, and galleries;
- active, outdoor recreation like bicycling, jogging, and kayaking; as well as newer, more extreme sports, like trail running and snowboarding;
- authenticity and uniqueness—historic buildings, established neighborhoods, unique music scene, a mix in the built environment, and social and ethnic diversity.

Florida finds that companies follow people and that creative businesses and employees are increasingly attracted to communities that offer diverse cultural and recreational opportunities.

Source: Cities and the Creative Class By Richard Florida, The Rise of the Creative Class: Why cities without gays and rock bands are losing the economic development race. By Richard Florida Article Washington Monthly May 2002


Walter Hill
Hydroelectric
Station



MAP 6.1, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL ASSETS

HISTORIC SITES	
1	Stones River National Battlefield
2	Fortress Rosecrans site
3	East Main Street Historic District
4	North Maney Avenue Historic District
PERFORMANCE ART THEATERS	
1	The Center for the Arts
2	Patterson Park Community Center
3	Murfreesboro Little Theater
4	Tucker Theatre at MTSU
5	T. Earl Hinton Music Hall at MTSU
6	First United Methodist Church
VISUAL ART SPACE	
1	City Hall Rotunda Gallery
2	Cannonsburgh Historic Village and Gallery
3	Linebaugh Library and Gallery
4	Two-Tone Art Gallery
5	Todd Art Gallery at MTSU
6	Baldiwn Photographic Gallery at MTSU
7	Gateway Island Public Art Sculpture
8	Murfree Spring Public Art
MUSEUMS	
1	Heritage Center
2	Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center
3	Oaklands Historic House Museum
4	Ransom Historic House and School Museum
5	Middle Tennessee Museum of Natural History
6	Discovery Center Children's Museum
EVENT AND FESTIVAL VENUES	
1	Courthouse Square
2	Stones River Greenway System
3	Cason Trail Greenway Park and Trailhead
4	Old Fort Park

Note: Assets not highlighted on the map include the Veterans Administration Hospital Historic District, Walter Hill Hydroelectric Station, Black Fox Camp Spring, and the individual historic buildings, homes and farms listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Sites. The **Stones River National Battlefield** is one of the most significant historical resources in Murfreesboro and Middle Tennessee and has merited U.S. National Park Service (NPS) unit designation. The *NPS News* reported that 258,000 people visited the battlefield in 2013 and spent more than $14 million in communities near the park, which, in turn, supported 205 jobs in the local area. (*U.S. National Park Service News*).

Stones River National Battlefield is significant not only because it is an economic driver for the Murfreesboro region, but also because it preserves, promotes, and memorializes significant events in Tennessee and United States history. Visitors to the park learn about how the battle secured transportation and agricultural resources for the Union Army and why it was a turning point in the Civil War and U.S. history. The park is a memorial to the victories and losses, as well as to the community whose descendants who lived there. The park preserves war artifacts and historic archaeological resources, such as the earthen fortifications or earthworks associated with Fortress Rosecrans, which served as major supply depots during the Civil War. The park also protects the natural environment so that visitors can learn about geology and experience Tennessee's native habitat and how these features influenced battle decisions. And finally, the park is a source of recreation for the region; for biking, hiking, picnicking, fishing, and bird watching.

Two earthen fortifications, or earthworks, associated with Fortress Rosecrans are not federally owned and are outside the boundaries of Stones River National Battlefield. The City of Murfreesboro owns the abandoned earthwork, "Curtain Wall No. 1," adjacent to the battlefield across Golf Lane. The remnants of a second earthwork, "Lunette Negley," is farther way and adjacent to Medical Center Parkway and is on privately owned land.

At **Black Fox Camp Spring**, a Tennessee Historical Marker explains how, at this site were the hunting grounds of Cherokee Chief, Black Fox, who later became the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nations.

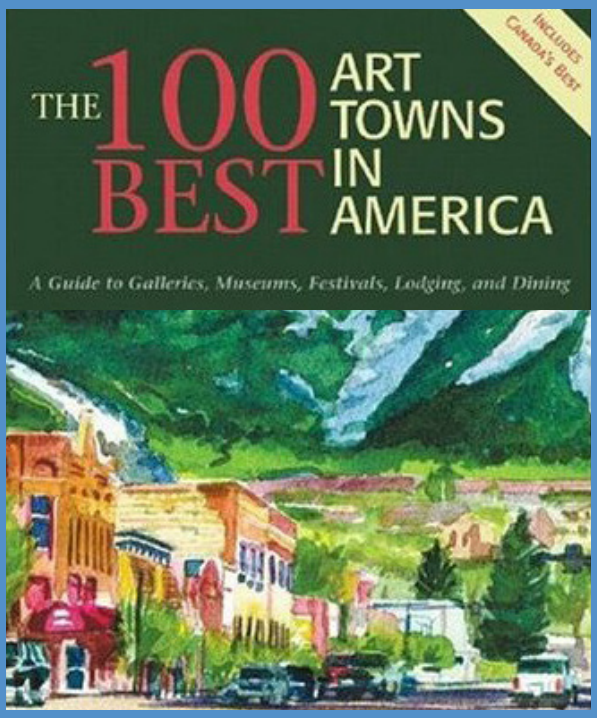
According to legend, in 1794, during the long-running battle fought between the Nickajack Expedition and the Chickamauga Cherokee (later to be known as the "Last Battle of the Cherokee"), Black Fox was overpowered by the Nickajack Expedition and leapt into the spring to escape; only to emerge later at Murfree Spring. This site is also significant because it was a resting site for the Cherokees during the Trail of Tears; and later became one of the first communities to be settled in Rutherford County.

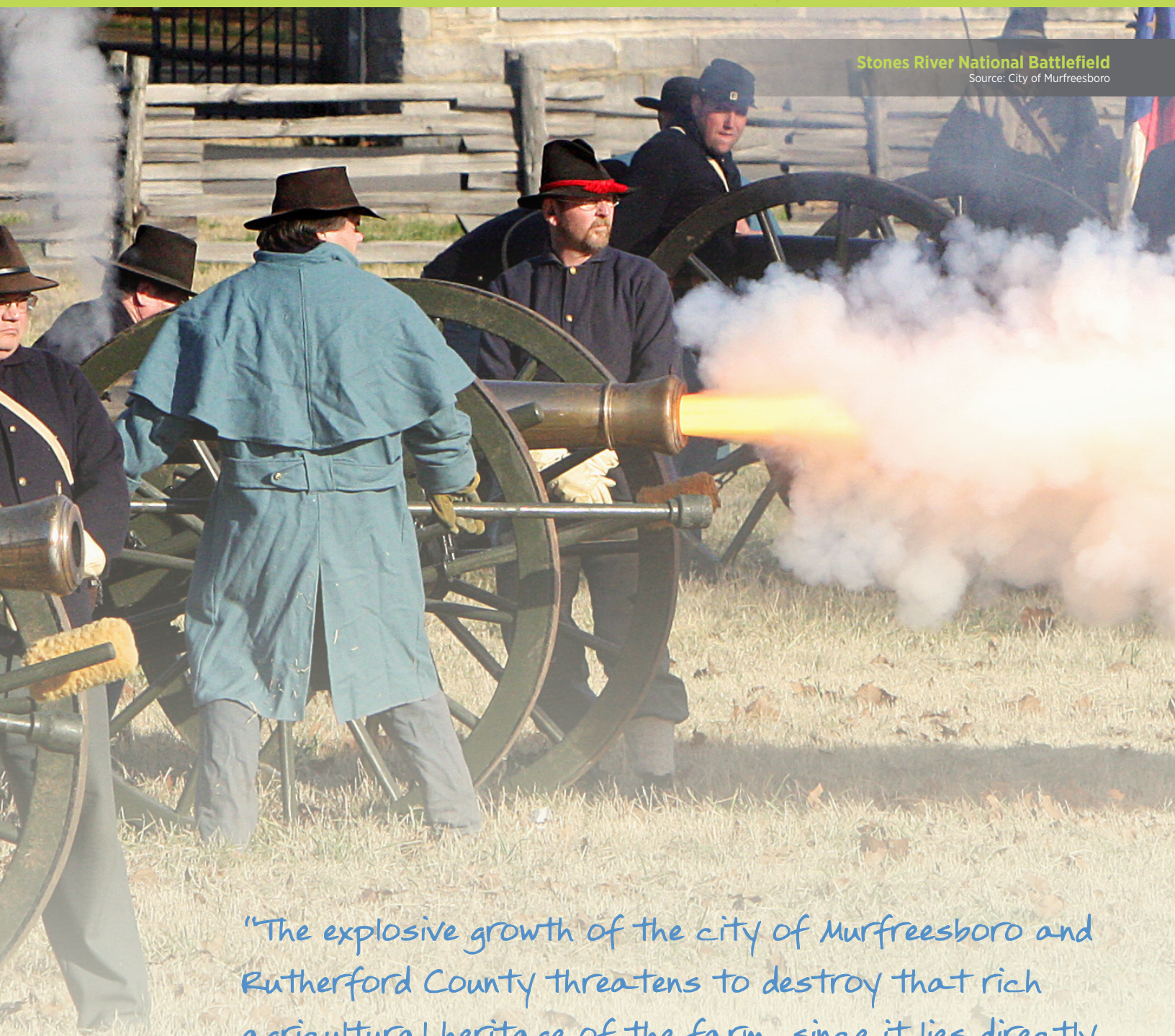
Brown's Mill in the City of Lascassas, in Rutherford County was previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places but was removed in 2002. Brown's Mill was the last original mill in Rutherford County; the Brown family was involved in the ownership and operation of the mill for 120 years until 1940 and the business continued with new owners until 1976 (*TDOT Historic Context Evaluation for Mills in Tennessee, May 2002*). A dam was built on the East Fork Stones River to power the mill in 1829. The City of Murfreesboro purchased the mill site in 1981 as an emergency water supply. A local preservation group attempted to stabilize the mill building but it collapsed in 1996 during restoration. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency began a dam removal process in 2013 to make the river accessible for hiking, fishing, and recreation. Brown's

[Continued on page 6.58]

Heritage Tourism (Moscow, Idaho)

Heritage tourism is the fastest growing product type in the United States, with 92.5 million adult Americans visiting a museum or historic site or attending a cultural presentation while traveling: that's 46 percent of the 199.8 million trips taken over 50 miles away from home. The Travel Industry of America reports that this $61.5 billion market grows at an average annual rate of 10 percent, while the $439 billion tourism industry as a whole is growing at a rate fluctuating between four and six percent. In ever-increasing numbers, educated and affluent travelers seek out experiences that embody historic, cultural, natural, and learning themes.





Stones River National Battlefield
Source: City of Murfreesboro

"The explosive growth of the city of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County threatens to destroy that rich agricultural heritage of the farm, since it lies directly in the path of future development ... The county is rapidly losing its family farms and the exceptional integrity of Elmwood provides an important record of the area's farming tradition."

- The Elmwood Farm nomination form to the National Register of Historic Places

Mill is planned to be a Blueway Trailhead and is slated for future development.

Cannonsburgh Village is a United States Bicentennial project created in 1976 by former Murfreesboro Mayor W. H. Westbrooks. The village is managed by the Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department. It is a re-creation of significant aspects representing more than 100 years of Middle Tennessee history. The park includes restored historically significant buildings and structures, and is home to a museum, art gallery, blacksmith shop, antique car garage, and several fairs and festivals.

Historic Districts. The National Register of Historic Places lists three historic districts in Murfreesboro, **Main Street Historic District**, **North Maney Historic District**, and **Murfreesboro Veterans Administration Hospital Historic District**. The Main Street and North Maney Historic Districts are located in downtown Murfreesboro and are composed of a number of buildings, mainly residential. The districts contain buildings that depict a unique architectural style and features, of a certain scale and similar timeframe. The Veterans Administration Hospital Historic District, which today is called York VA Medical Center, was honored to be on the National Register with other historical medical centers that were built following World War I up to World War II. The campus is 321 acres and includes 35 historic resources.

Historic Buildings. In Murfreesboro, there are 23 historic buildings and farms (refer to Table 6.11, *National Register of Historic Places-listed Properties in Rutherford County)*. Each building and farm possess significant characteristics, either associated with their architecture styles and detailing, or their location and role in the region's rich agricultural history or association with the Civil War.

For example, **Elmwood** is a 1,400 acre working farm that was constructed in 1842 and has been in the Hord family for five generations (only a small portion of the farm is listed on the National Register). This property played a significant role in the Civil War because of its location and also served as a Union hospital. Other significant buildings include the **Bradley Academy,** which was constructed between 1820 and 1830 and was the first school established in Rutherford County. The school served as a hospital during the small pox epidemic in 1836 and during Battle of Stones River. The **Rutherford County Courthouse** plays a huge role in state and county history and the building and square around remain the center of activity within the City of Murfreesboro.

STRATEGY 6.25: *Provide residents and visitors a better understanding and awareness of local heritage by enhancing information and access to historic sites.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to promote Murfreesboro history by providing information to interpret the history of Murfreesboro through historical displays, programs, and interpretative signage.
2. Protect historic sites from adjacent growth pressures and incompatible development. Acknowledge how surrounding development affects the natural environment and habitat, and the interpretation of these sites.
3. Continue to partner with the Friends of Stones River National Battlefield to promote and protect the heritage and landscape of the battlefield from plans for future development.
4. Continue to partner with the Stones River National Battlefield to provide park improvements such as parking, shade structures and pavilions; connect park trails to the City Greenway system; as the growing population will require more green space.
5. Continue to partner with the Stones River National Battlefield to develop new land use and development design guidelines that are more compatible with the park's resource protection goals.
6. Continue to partner with the Stones River National Battlefield to protect, restore, and promote the non-federally-owned, historically significant earthworks as historic sites. Assist the State Historic Preservation Officer in preparing the requisite documentation for nominating the earthworks to the National Register of Historic Places. Utilize the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Preservation and Treatment of Historic Properties* to appropriately protect the earthworks; as well as the following National Register Bulletins, including:
   - No.30: *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*;
   - No. 36: *Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Archeological Properties*;
   - No. 40: *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields*;

   (Note: it is recognized that just because a property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places doesn't keep the property from being developed; but it does keep federal funds from being used in the development.)

[Continued on page 6.60]

TABLE 6.10, LIST OF NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES LISTED PROPERTIES IN RUTHERFORD COUNTY

CHRISTIANA
Morgan House
COMPTON
Benjamine Rucker House
CITY OF EAGLEVILLE
William B. Jordan Farm
William Harrison McCord House
Absalom Scales House
LACASSAS
Dement House
Jarman Farm
READYVILLE
Caff-E-Hill Farm
Uncle Dave Macon House
McGill - Becton - Cates Family Farm
Murray Farm
Charles Ready House
ROCKVALE
Rockvale Store
TOWN OF SMYRNA
Sam Davis House
Idler's Retreat
WALTERHILL
Providence Primitive Baptist Church
Riverside Farm
Searcy - Matthews - Tarpley Farm

CITY OF MURFREESBORO
Allen Chapel AME Church
Arnold-Harrell House
Beesley Primitive Baptist Church
Thomas C. Black House
Thomas J.B. Turner House, or Boxwood
Bradley Academy
Childress-Ray House
Collier-Crichlow House
Collier-Lane-Crichlow House
East Main Street Historic District
Elmwood Farm
First Presbyterian Church
Fortress Rosecrans Site
Logan Henderson Farm
Enoch H. Jones House
Landsverger-Gerhardt House
Marymont House
Middle Tennessee State Teachers College Training School
Veterans Administration Hospital Historic District (York VA Medical Center)
North Maney Avenue Historic District
Oaklands Historic House
Old First Presbyterian Church and Old City Cemetery
General Joseph B. Palmer House
Rutherford County Courthouse
Rutherford Health Department
Robert Andrew Smith Farm
John C. Spence House
Stones River National Battlefield
Walter Hill Hydroelectric Station

Promotion and Enhancement of Cultural, Artistic and Civic Resources

Murfreesboro has several organizations and facilities that support the area's cultural and artistic needs.

Performing Arts. The Center for the Arts, Patterson Park Community Center, Murfreesboro Little Theater, and Tucker Theatre at MTSU all have stages for plays and musicals. The Center for the Arts and Murfreesboro Little Theater have regular seasons of shows. Additional performing arts groups include M-Prov: Murfreesboro Improv and youth programs such as Bradley Academy musical theater program, Center Stage Academy, and Youth Empowerment through Arts & Humanities, Inc. (YEAH!) in the Boro.

The T. Earl Hinton Music Hall at MTSU houses performances for the MTSU School of Music and other local performers like the Tennessee Valley Winds and the Murfreesboro Youth Orchestra. First United Methodist Church is the stage for the Murfreesboro Symphony Orchestra.

Visual Arts. Art exhibit space in Murfreesboro includes City Hall, the Center for the Arts, Cannonsburgh Village, the Linebaugh Library, and the Two-Tone Art Gallery, located downtown. All have space or use part of their space for rotating exhibitions showcasing local artists. The Murfreesboro Art League is a non-profit organization that offers membership and art classes and displays the member and student art in the gallery at Cannonsburgh Historic Village. Murfreesboro established a City Hall Art Committee that is "responsible for advancing the awareness and support of our visual arts resources in Murfreesboro and for scheduling exhibitions of community artists and artists of local interest in the rotunda and lobbies of City Hall." MTSU also has gallery space, the Todd Art Gallery and the Baldwin Photographic Gallery. And, the Stones River Crafts Association puts on an annual Art Studio Tour in which local artists open up their private studios to the public. Its an opportunity for the community to meet local artist and how and where they work.

Public Art. Under Murfreesboro's former Mayor, Tommy Bragg, plans were underway for a new process to place works of public art throughout the Murfreesboro Greenway System. In 2013, a community arts partnership between the City of Murfreesboro, local schools and the MTSU Department a sculpture created public art for Gateway Island. A student design competition was held and the winning design was translated into sculpture by a MTSU professor of art. The City Hall Art Committee played a large part coordinating the competition.

Although not public, Murfree's Spring Wetlands has displayed several environmental sculptures throughout the plaza utilizing the old pump equipment that was salvaged from the water treatment plant and refurbished.

Museums. There are several museums in Murfreesboro including the Heritage Center exhibits Rutherford County history with an emphasis on Murfreesboro's Civil War era. Bradley Academy Museum and Cultural Center celebrates the academy's history in education and African American education. Oaklands Historic House Museum is a restored plantation home where visitors may learn about the prosperity in the antebellum south and hardships during the Civil War. Ransom Historic House and School Museum, is run by Rutherford County Historical Society and features a restored school house.

Other, nonhistorical museums include Middle Tennessee Museum of Natural History and the Discovery Center Children's Museum.

Outdoor Events. The Courthouse Square downtown Murfreesboro is home to the Friday Night Live Concert Series, JazzFest, and Saturday Market on the Square. Cannonsburgh Village hosts annual events like Harvest Days, Pioneer Days, the Craft Fair, and Movies under the Stars. The city park and greenway system has outdoor venue space where concerts, festivals, and other events may be held. Events take place at the pavilion at Cason Trail Greenway Park and Trailhead, Old Fort Park which holds the annual Greenway Art Festival, and Gateway Island. Table 6.12, *Murfreesboro Events*, is an ongoing and growing list of events and festivals which are offered in Murfreesboro throughout the year.

COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

- City Hall Art Committee
  - "The City Hall Art Committee is responsible for advancing the awareness and support of our visual arts resources in Murfreesboro and for scheduling exhibitions of community artists and artists of local interest in the rotunda and lobbies of City Hall. The committee is also responsible for encouraging gifts of art to the city."
- Greenway Projects Committee
- Historic Zoning Commission
  - "The Historic Zoning Commission studies, recommends, and oversees historic district boundaries and guidelines for renovation of existing structures or the building of new structures for the protection of historic neighborhoods and districts."

- Linebaugh Library Board
- Main Street Organization
  - "Main Street is committed to maintaining, enhancing and promoting the historic downtown as the heart of our community. Main Street capitalizes on the unique character of the courthouse square and the surrounding business district with the goal of transforming it into the cultural, social, professional and retail center of Rutherford County, in essence, the hub of community life. Affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Main Street Center, our organization focuses on the four elements that help define downtown success: organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring."
- Friends of the Greenway
  - Educational kiosks at trailheads
  - Biology backpacks for use by teachers, home school groups and parents
  - Trail mile markers
  - Greenway maps
  - Scavenger Hunt guide
  - Drinking fountains
  - Kayaks to paddle the Stones River
  - Recycling bins at trailhead entrances
  - Trees for shade along the Greenway
  - Water and snacks for volunteers
  - Benches
- Friends of the Stones River National Battlefield
- Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County
  - "The Heritage Center is a joint venture between the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, Main Street: Murfreesboro / Rutherford County, Inc., the City of Murfreesboro, and the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University. Additional operating support comes from the Rutherford County Government and State Farm Insurance. The Heritage Center is also home to Main Street Murfreesboro, a key non-profit institution that encourages the preservation of the city's historic downtown business district."
- Rutherford County Historical Society
- MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
- Rutherford County Archaeological Society
- Middle Tennessee Civil War Roundtable

[Continued on page 6.62]

TABLE 6.11, MURFREESBORO EVENTS

EVENT	TIME OF YEAR
Pioneer Days	April
NaturALE Festival	April
Main Street JazzFest	May
Shakesbeer	May
Ethos Music Festival	May
Friday Night Live Concert Series	June through September
Main Street Saturday Market	June through September
Movies Under the Stars	June and July
Uncle Dave Macon Days Old Time Music and Dance Festival	July
Greenway Art Festival at Old Fort Park	September
Harvest Days	October
Trick or Treat on the Square	October
Downtown Carriage Rides	December
Christmas Tree Lighting	December

GRANTS LINKS FOR ARTS PROGRAMS

- American Arts Alliance: www.americanartsalliance.org
- American Alliance of Museums: http://www.aam-us.org/
- Americans for the Arts: http://www.artsusa.org
- Foundation Center's RFP Bulletin for Arts and Culture: http://fdncenter.org/pnd/rfp/cat_arts.jhtml;jsessionid=CJCI1VV3KQI1MJUIN3XCFEQ
- Fundsnet Arts Links: http://www.fundsnetservices.com/arts2.htm
- Institute of Museum and Library Services: http://www.imls.gov
- National Assembly of State Arts Agencies: http://www.nasaa- arts.org
- National Endowment for the Arts: http://www.arts.endow.gov
- National Endowment for the Humanities: http://www.neh.gov
- Wallace Reader's Digest Fund for Arts: http://www.wallacefund

This plan envisions that the City of Murfreesboro's role with respect to arts and culture will be primarily as collaborator and clearinghouse for information regarding cultural arts events, groups, and related organizations. The City will continue to sponsor a variety of special events as part of its community services. As the community matures and new public facilities are constructed the City should seek opportunities to broaden the array of cultural activities and the types of spaces available to the public. This should include creation of public gathering venues, displays of public art and performance, tourism development, and a general nurturing of community identity and spirit.

The arts community should have an increased presence in the park system. A benefit of being a university town and proximity to music capital Nashville is the availability of cultural events and activities. A cultural venue for visual art displays, performances, demonstrations, and exhibits is the City's parks and public spaces. A formulated program would serve to enliven the park experience while giving an opportunity of creative expression to those of local, regional, and statewide talents.

STRATEGY 6.26: *Preserve and promote cultural and arts-related events. Support the development of facilities and programs for public art and cultural opportunities that create and enrich a strong sense of community identity and promote a high quality of life.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. The City should consider advocating for additional visual and performing arts facilities to serve the needs of its growing community.
2. The City and Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce should consider incorporating cultural arts as part of its overall economic development program, especially those events and venues that attract out-of-town visitors.
3. The City should consider supporting the creation of a cultural arts district and designation of open spaces and public facilities in Murfreesboro for cultural arts performances and the display of art that will attract out of town visitors.
4. The City should consider incorporating the arts into its downtown plan to enhance pedestrian connections and highlight cultural assets including public art and community history.

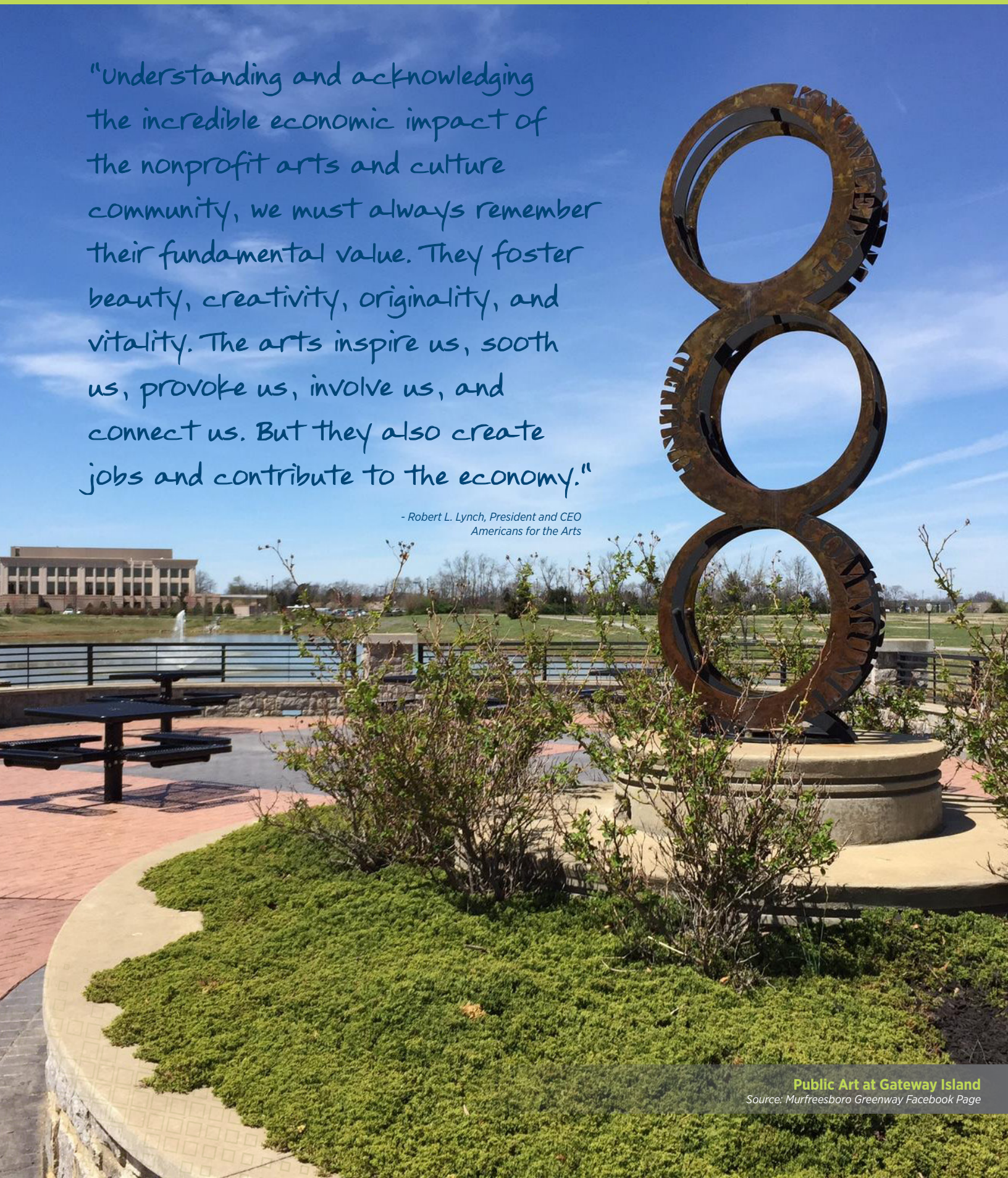
STRATEGY 6.27: *Facilitate partnerships and collaborations with other public agencies, community based groups, and the private sector to expand opportunities for cultural arts.*

It is the goal of the City to facilitate partnerships and collaborations with other public agencies, community based groups, and the private sector to expand opportunities for cultural arts. This includes strengthening relationships with Murfreesboro City Schools and Rutherford County School District, neighboring cities, the Linebaugh Library System, local artists, businesses, and arts related community-based groups.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. The City will collaborate with City Schools, the Rutherford County School District, other jurisdictions, and the Linebaugh Library to present quality arts programs and performances to the community.
2. Maintain and enhance the use of service organizations (Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, etc.) in arts and business community partnerships (e.g. Kiwanis sponsorship of annual Tree Lighting ceremony).

[Continued on page 6.62]



"Understanding and acknowledging the incredible economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture community, we must always remember their fundamental value. They foster beauty, creativity, originality, and vitality. The arts inspire us, sooth us, provoke us, involve us, and connect us. But they also create jobs and contribute to the economy."

- Robert L. Lynch, President and CEO
Americans for the Arts

Public Art at Gateway Island
Source: Murfreesboro Greenway Facebook Page

3. Partner with the City Hall Art Committee, Murfreesboro Art League, and the Center for the Arts to expand arts programming, such as a summer arts program to complement recreational activities.
4. Coordinate with the Middle Tennessee State University to establish an art incubator in Downtown that helps to develop and grow the creative class, with parks serving as a conduit for public display.

STRATEGY 6.28: *Develop a Community Cultural Plan.*

Enhance and enrich Murfreesboro's community identity and "sense of place" by developing a Community Cultural Plan through which to enhance, expand and promote the various forms and expressions of cultural arts found in and around the City.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. As a means of building multicultural understanding, develop programs through which to educate residents about the cultural traditions of the unique ethnic groups that comprise Murfreesboro's population.
2. Promote cultural arts and events that distinguish Murfreesboro from other cities within the region.

STRATEGY 6.29: *Actively promote the development and display of local and regional cultural art forms and traditions.*

Broaden development of the community's cultural and social infrastructure and its integration into park sites and recreational programs.

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Increase public awareness of cultural arts programs and services through multiple forms of media, including the City's cable television station, City publications, community partnerships, and through increased accessibility to public artwork.
2. Develop an effective coordinated marketing strategy, regionally and statewide, to promote Murfreesboro and its arts and culture as a destination to regional visitors and adjacent communities.
3. Enhance the City's website as it relates to community culture and history; explore ways to more actively market Murfreesboro venues and programs. Incorporate museums, monuments, and markers as park amenities and destinations for tourists and visitors.
4. Create a special directory of arts-related businesses (art galleries, craft shops, frame stores, etc.).
5. Expand opportunities for the visual and performing arts including space within parks for displays and demonstrations, walking tours, heritage trails, and educational interpretation through signage, monuments, and expressive way-finding.
6. Encourage participation from the private and business sectors to provide art for display in public places. This includes encouraging citizens and businesses to underwrite, through individual donations, the creation of artist-made streetscape furnishings such as benches or flower basket poles.
7. Create a directory of spaces available at local establishments for arts related activities (e.g., art exhibits in business lobbies, special events and small concerts in atrium areas, etc.).
8. Create and publish a public art walking tour for viewing of pieces on display in parks, open spaces, and along community pathways.

ART WALL

I would like to have a legal graffiti wall somewhere in Murfreesboro, similar to The Wash Yard in Nashville. It's an abandoned car wash that acts as a parking lot for Phat Bites Deli during the day. The owner of Phat Bites has a permit that allows us to paint there when ever we want. This is giving a lot of local artists a place to practice piecing. Nashville has a wide variety of style and talent.

9. Incorporate more art and cultural affairs into City festivals and activities such as
10. Develop an amphitheater as part of the future park program in West Murfreesboro.
11. Consider integration of a public stage/amphitheater in the plaza in front of City Hall and the Linebaugh Library for showing independent films and other live performances. Also, consider using the plaza for rotating art displays (similar to the Art Showcase in City Hall) with a highly unique space design.
12. Create expanded opportunities for environmental outings by offering facilities and programs to promote nature education, habitat observance, and eco-tourism.
13. Expand the educational interpretation program like that along the Stones River Greenway system through signage, kiosks, monuments, and expressive way-finding.
14. Utilize the City's Greenway Arts Festival to attract heritage tourists, who, along with eco-tourists, represent the fastest growing national tourism economy.
15. Continue to support and expand the Farmer's Market and other festivities in Courthouse Square.
16. Develop a large, outdoor performance stage for music venues and plays.

STRATEGY 6.30: *Work with the Historic Zoning Commission and other local partners to preserve, stabilize and restore historically significant sites, structures and buildings that contribute Murfreesboro's built environment and cultural heritage; such as Cannonsburgh Village which houses a large quantity of historical artifacts.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Strive to recognize and preserve architecturally or historically significant structures built more than 50 years ago.
2. Consider the impacts of new development on historical resources as a part of the City's environmental review process and require appropriate mitigating measures.
3. Coordinate with the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation on development issues related to potential archaeological sites.
4. Seek both state/federal and private funding for restoration and enhancement of historical resources.
5. Assist in the identification of available spaces for the proper storage, preservation and display of significant cultural and historical artifacts.
6. Provide appropriate means to recognize property owners who rehabilitate, restore, retain or reproduce historical elements of their properties.
7. While promoting historic preservation, the City will adopt no policy or regulation which shall limit a site or structure from being used in an economically viable manner. *[Continued on page 6.66]*

Lifelong Learning

As previously discussed, providing access to the arts, cultural, and educational opportunities are important considerations for attracting and retaining the knowledge-based, creative class. Good schools are often one of the most significant considerations for highly-educated parents who are considering relocation. It is expected that Murfreesboro's growing population of senior citizens would also enjoy access to continuing education, such as University course audits, distinguished speakers, and lecture programs. The local emphasis on education, culture, and the arts provides jobs for educators and artists and promotes tourism.

Lifelong learning is a way for universities to reach out to local senior citizens to provide access to the academic resources of the University through course audits and/or a specialized lecture series. In Murfreesboro, such a program would potentially:

- Help to strengthen the tie between MTSU and the community;
- Make the City more attractive to retirees by providing an additional educational/cultural opportunity; and
- Increase the University's donor base.

By way of example, Florida Atlantic University (main campus in Boca Raton, Florida) created a "Lifelong Learning Society" in the 1980s, which now has more than 30,000 members who attend courses, lectures, and cultural events on four campuses in the South Florida region. By 2006, members of FAU's LLS donated more than $1 million to endowed professorships, graduate fellowships, and undergraduate scholarships; and approximately $6.5 million to two state-of-the-art lecture halls.

Lifelong learning can be established with relatively low overhead. Operations on the scale of FAU's LLS are not necessary for a successful program.

Health

According to the Trust for America's Health, two-thirds of adults and nearly one-third of children and teens in the United States are overweight or obese - and lack of physical activity is a leading contributor to the epidemic. Providing access to recreational facilities is a critical strategy for helping people of all ages become more active by increasing the distribution and access to park space.

For this reason, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading health organizations recommend increasing and/or enhancing access to school property where people can be active.

HEALTH IN TENNESSEE

According to the CDC, in 2009, Tennessee adults had the third highest incidence of obesity in the United States (32.8%). Over two-thirds of adults (69%) in Tennessee were overweight or obese. The children of Tennessee were not immune to this devastating health challenge. Thirty nine percent of our children ages 10 to 17 were overweight or obese, with the number approaching 52 percent in some counties.

Multiple factors have produced today's record high rates of obesity. Like many Americans, Tennesseans are eating more calories and getting less physical activity than ever before. In the past two decades, the social, cultural and physical environments that affect food choices and physical activity opportunities have changed dramatically.

The Built Environment and Physical Activity

67% : PERCENTAGE OF THE U.S. WORKFORCE THAT IS OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE.

47% : INCREASED LIKELIHOOD THAT PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN NEIGHBORHOODS WITH SIDEWALKS GET AT LEAST 30 MINUTES OF EXERCISE PER DAY.

50% : INCREASED LIKELIHOOD THAT PEOPLE WHO LIVE NEAR TRAILS MEET PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES.

Source: Public Health Institute: Active Living Research

PARKS FOR PROMOTING HEALTH

Part of determining whether or not the park system is broadly distributed and serving the needs of the residents of Murfreesboro, is to get a better understanding of how the city's park and recreation system is being used to promote healthy outcomes in the city. In other words, is the park and recreation system sufficiently adequate to promote health outcomes for Murfreesboro residents.

Once on-site, parks can provide a multitude of options to promote healthy lifestyles and increase physical activity.

These could include running trails and exercise stations; pick-up basketball and volleyball courts; open play areas, playscapes, and other play structures; swimming and splash pads, etc. In addition, parks could also be used for structured exercise classes (e.g., running clubs, yoga, etc.), health fairs, and special events (e.g., running races).

[Continued on page 6.69]

Source: Murfreesboro Greenway Facebook Page

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that nearly two-thirds of Tennesseans do not get enough regular exercise to sustain good health, and 31.5 percent get no exercise at all.

Source: Tennessee 2020 Plan

The Benefits of Parks in Advancing the Development of Healthy Communities

According to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), parks and recreation possess three values that make them essential services to communities:

Economic Value:

- Parks improve the local tax base and increase property values;
- Cities can use parks to reduce public costs for stormwater management, flood control, transportation, and other forms of built infrastructure;
- Quality parks and recreation are cited as one of the top reasons for business relocation decisions;
- Park and recreation programs generate revenue from operating costs; and
- Indirect revenues are generated for the local and regional economies through the hosting of sports tournaments and special events such as arts, music, and holiday festivals. Economic activity from hospitality expenditures, tourism, fuel, recreational equipment sales, and many other private sector businesses yield more sustainable local and regional economies.

Public Health and Environmental Benefits:

- Parks are the places that people go to get healthy and stay physically fit;
- Parks and recreation programs and services contribute to the health of children, youth, adults and seniors;
- Designing places within which people can become physically active can improve individual and community health, and result in an increase of residents who exercise regularly;
- Research shows correlations between the reduction of stress, lowered blood pressure, and perceived physical health and the length of time spent in parks;
- Parks and other conserved open spaces help to improve water quality, protect groundwater, prevent flooding, improve air quality, produce wildlife habitat, and provide places for individuals to connect with natural environment and recreate outdoors;
- Cities can use parks to help protect biodiversity; and
- When planned as part of a system of green infrastructure, parks can help shape urban form and buffer incompatible uses.

Social Importance:

- Parks are a tangible reflection of the quality of life in a community; providing identity for citizens and enhancing the perception of quality of life in the community;
- Parks provide gathering places for social groups and families, as well as for individuals of all ages and economic status, regardless of their ability to pay for access;
- By providing gathering places, parks facilitate social interactions among residents that are critical to maintaining community cohesion and pride, as well as developing social ties that become the glue that holds the community together and drives future actions;
- Voter approval rates for bond measures to acquire parks and conserve open space has exceeded 75 percent in recent years, revealing the public's prioritization of parks in government spending;
- Parks and recreation provide places for health and well-being that are accessible by persons of all ages and abilities, especially to those with disabilities; and
- Community involvement in the planning and design of neighborhood parks, as well as access to parks and recreation opportunities are positively associated with lower crime rate, vandalism, and juvenile delinquency.

> Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
>
> *Source: World Health Organization*

Eat Well, Play More Tennessee: Tennessee Statewide Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan

Eat Well, Play More Tennessee is a comprehensive plan to reduce obesity and chronic disease in Tennessee. This plan is a call to action created by the Tennessee Obesity Taskforce (TOT) to serve as a roadmap for reducing obesity in Tennessee. The right to health is fundamental. Eat Well, Play More Tennessee focuses on ways to make the environment more supportive of healthy eating and physical activity in all sectors.

STATE OF HEALTH IN TENNESSEE

Excess weight and obesity - often the result of physical inactivity and unhealthy eating - have tremendous consequences on Tennessee's health and economy. Both are linked to a number of chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, certain cancers, hypertension, osteoarthritis and asthma.

In 2009, Tennessee adults had the third highest incidence of obesity in the United States (32.8 percent). Over two-thirds of adults (69 percent) in Tennessee are overweight or obese. With respect to children, thirty-nine percent of our children aged 10-17 are overweight or obese, with the number approaching 52 percent in some counties. Like many Americans, Tennesseans are eating more calories and getting less physical activity than ever before. In the past two decades, the social, cultural and physical environments that affect food choices and physical activity opportunities have changed dramatically.

ECONOMIC COST OF OBESITY

Just as obesity has a devastating toll on health, it also places a huge financial burden on the health care delivery system. Researchers have shown that an obese person has $1,429 per year more medical costs, or about 42 percent more costs, than someone of normal weight. Costs for an obese Medicare recipient are even greater. In addition to direct health care costs, obesity results in lower worker productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher workers' compensation claims than for normal weight employees.

HEALTH DISPARITIES

Many individuals and communities - especially racial and ethnic minorities, people with lower incomes, women, and vulnerable populations of people of differing abilities and ages - experience disproportionately higher rates of obesity and chronic diseases associated with physical inactivity and poor nutrition. Recent studies have shown that people earning the lowest wages are more likely to have weights in the obese range.

Strategy 6.31: *Consider conducting a community assessment of access to healthy food and opportunities for physical activity.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to research available assessment tools, and adapt and disseminate to potential users.
2. Continue to develop community teams to perform community assessment.
3. Continue to assess the following:
   - Where people access food and beverages such as and not limited to the location of grocery stores and supermarkets, fast-food restaurants, corner stores, vending machines, farmers' markets, and community gardens.
   - Assess availability and connectivity of sidewalks, bike lanes, parks and greenways.
   - Assess Rover routes in relation to food and physical activity access
4. Continue to evaluate assessment results to identify priorities to implement.
5. Continue to seek partnerships with Nashville Area MPO as well as the Rutherford County Public Health Department regarding this assessment.

Strategy 6.32: *Increase physical activity and healthy eating in the Aging population.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Consider providing senior citizens access to vegetables grown in community gardens by bringing veggie vans, small farm stands, fresh food vendors to assisted living facilities.
2. Consider increase funding or incentives to senior facilities that provide fitness/nutrition education and exercise "wellness classes" to members.

[Continued on page 6.72]

For the first time in two centuries, the current generation of children in America may have shorter life expectancies than their parents.

-Tennessee Statewide Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan

Being Intentional About Health Outcomes

Tools such as the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and the Healthy Development Measurement Tool (HDMT) are used to quantify and qualify the public health impacts of proposed policies, plans, or development projects.

- **Health Impact Assessments** helps communities assess the potential effects of a proposed policy, plan, program, or project on community health, including the distribution of benefits and costs within the community. HIAs recommend strategies for monitoring and managing health and bring public health issues to decision makers outside of the public health field, such as in transportation and land use. HIAs can be voluntary or regulatory processes that focus on health outcomes. Local HIAs have been conducted by the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, such as the Hamilton Springs Transit Oriented Development School Siting HIA completed in 2013.
- **The Healthy Development Measurement Tool** is an evaluation instrument used to assess and address health needs in urban development plans and projects with the goal of achieving a higher-quality social and physical environment that advances good health. Created by the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the HDMT has six core objectives: environmental stewardship, sustainable and safe transportation, social cohesion, public infrastructure, adequate and healthy housing, and a healthy economy.

Source: ULI - Intersections: Health and the Built Environment

Source: Patternson Park Community Center Facebook Page

Health

Through a modest increase in daily activity, most Americans can improve their health and quality of life.

HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DO CHILDREN, ADULTS, AND SENIORS NEED?

AEROBIC ACTIVITY

MUSCLE STRENGTHENING

BONE STRENGTHENING

CHILDREN			
	60+ minutes of physical activity each day. This can include moderate-intensity aerobic activity. Be sure to include vigorous-intensity aerobic activity for your child on at least 3 days per week.	Muscle strengthening activity, such as gymnastics or push-ups, should be included at least 3 days per week as part of your child's 60 or more minutes.	Bone strengthening activities, such as jumping rope or running, should be included at least 3 days per week as part of your child's 60 or more minutes.
ADULTS			
	150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity weekly.	Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups.	–
SENIORS			
	150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity weekly	Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups.	–

Sources: Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General Executive Summary; Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

THE BETTER BORO PROJECT

The Better Boro Project

The Better Boro Project is a city-wide initiative launched by Mayor Shane McFarland that is designed to promote healthy eating, encourage outdoor recreation, and provide unique and accessible wellness activities. The upcoming events include:

- Tai Chi;
- Family Camp Outs;
- Zumba;
- Boat Day;
- Fitness Bootcamp;
- Parks and Rec Fun Run;
- Yoga;
- Half marathon Training;
- Thursday Morning Bike Rides;
- Guided Family and Adult Hikes;
- Holiday Hold; and
- Square One Run / 5K.

Source: City of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department

Race in Downtown Murfreesboro
Source: Jim Davis

Equity and Park Access

PARK ACCESS

Recognizing the importance of accessible parks, cities across the country have adopted specific goals for park access based on walking distance. The national leaders in terms of park access include Boston, New York City, Denver, San Francisco, Seattle, Minneapolis, and Chicago.

- In Denver, more than 90 percent of residents live within 6 walkable blocks of a park, which is tracked with GIS analyses to ensure the parks are safely accessible by pedestrians. The city recently raised the park accessibility goal to four blocks for urban areas.
- Seattle has a 1/8 mile goal for urban parks in urban areas, and ¼ to ½ mile for neighborhood parks. More than 79 percent of children live within ¼ mile of a park.
- Minneapolis adopted its six block goal more than 50 years ago, and now more than 99.4 percent of the city's residents live within six blocks of a park.
- In Boston, 97 percent of children live within ¼ mile of a park. Only 2,900 children do not live within walking access of a park.
- In New York City, 91 percent of children live within ¼ mile of a park
- In San Francisco, 85 percent of children live within ¼ mile of a park.

In Chicago, more than 90 percent of the city's 2.9 million residents live within ½ mile of a park or play lot. The City's current goal is for each city resident to live within 1/10 mile from a "mini park" in urban areas, ¼ mile from neighborhood parks, and ½ mile from community parks. Other cities have followed foot by adopting similar accessibility goals. St. Paul, Minnesota; Miami, Florida; Detroit, Michigan; and Long Beach, California, are all working to meet a ¼ mile goal for urban areas, while another 21 cities, including El Paso, Texas, are working to meet goals ranging from a 5 minute walk to ½ mile distance.

Strategy 6.33: *Provide access to programs and facilities to all members within the community.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Provide the optimum geographic distribution of recreation opportunities.
2. Coordinate with the Planning and Zoning Department to develop a Greenways Dedication Ordinance to help facilitate the expansion of the Greenways, Blueways and Bikeways Master Plan.

Strategy 6.34: *Examine walking access to parks from each neighborhood and subdivision within the City.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Determine the percent of population within a walk route of less than a mile to a park entrance from home.
2. Consider partnering with local organizations that can provide technical assistance to develop and sustain community gardens.

Strategy 6.35: *Increase opportunities and access to physical activity and healthy foods for the mentally and physically disabled populations.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

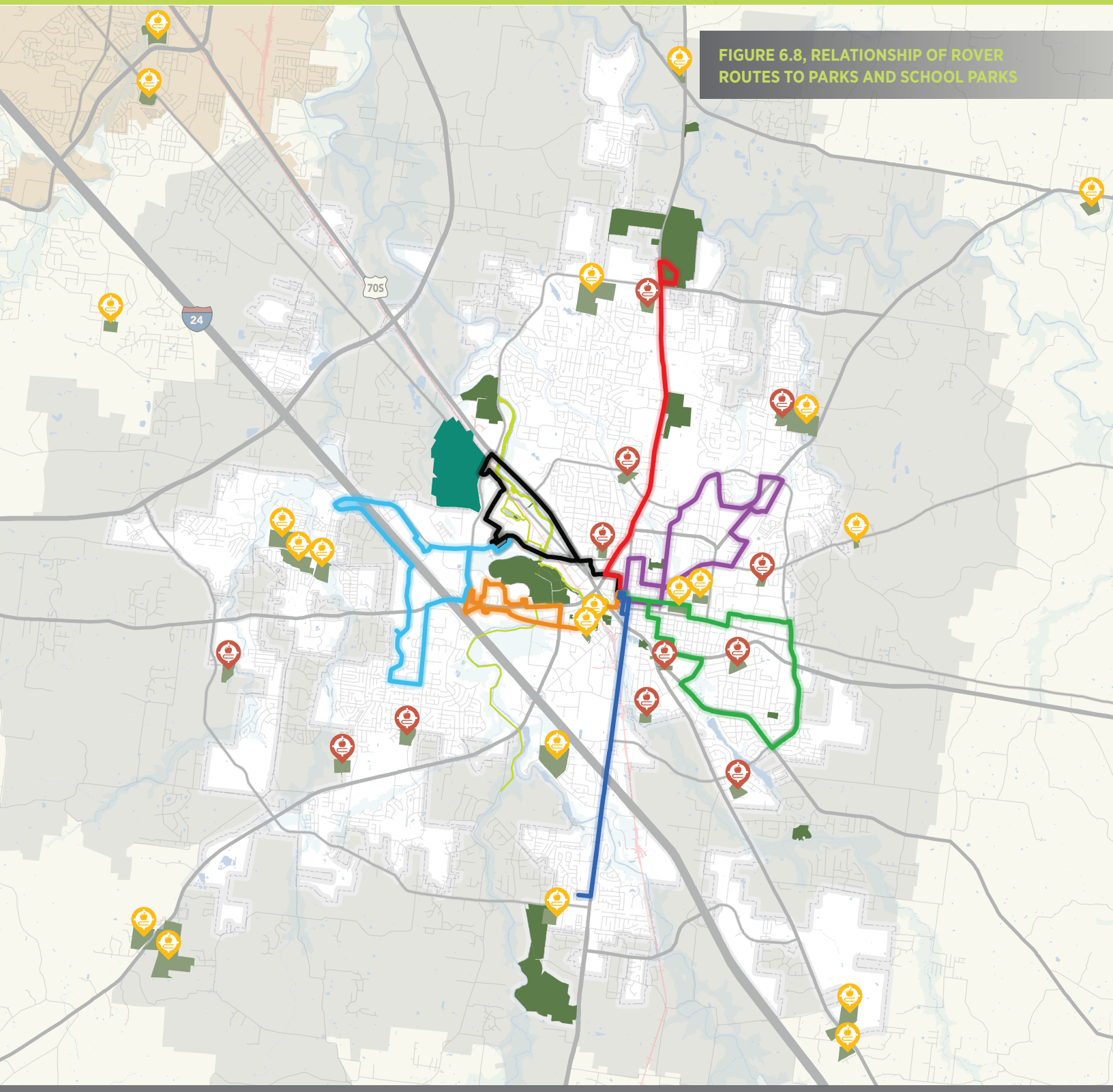
1. Advocate for provision of exercise equipment for group homes to support those residents who are unable to leave the facility for walks or other exercise.
2. Research and pursue grant options for exercise equipment/facilities for group homes.

Strategy 6.36: *Ensure that recreational programs meet the interests and needs of persons of all ages and abilities by providing programs independently and in cooperation with partners.*

ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

1. Continue to provide financial assistance to City residents of all ages to ensure access to city parks, recreation programs, and facilities. (Note: $455,782.50 in financial aid was granted in 2014.)
2. Provide opportunities for individuals and groups (including low-income, minority, disabled, elderly, and the youth at risk populations) to participate in cultural, recreational, and educational activities that foster better health and wellness and strengthen both mind and body.
3. Consider the creation of a scholarship and investigate opportunities to affiliate with other agencies (i.e., public/public or public/private partnerships), special interest groups, service clubs, and the private sector in organizing and operating special events and programs.

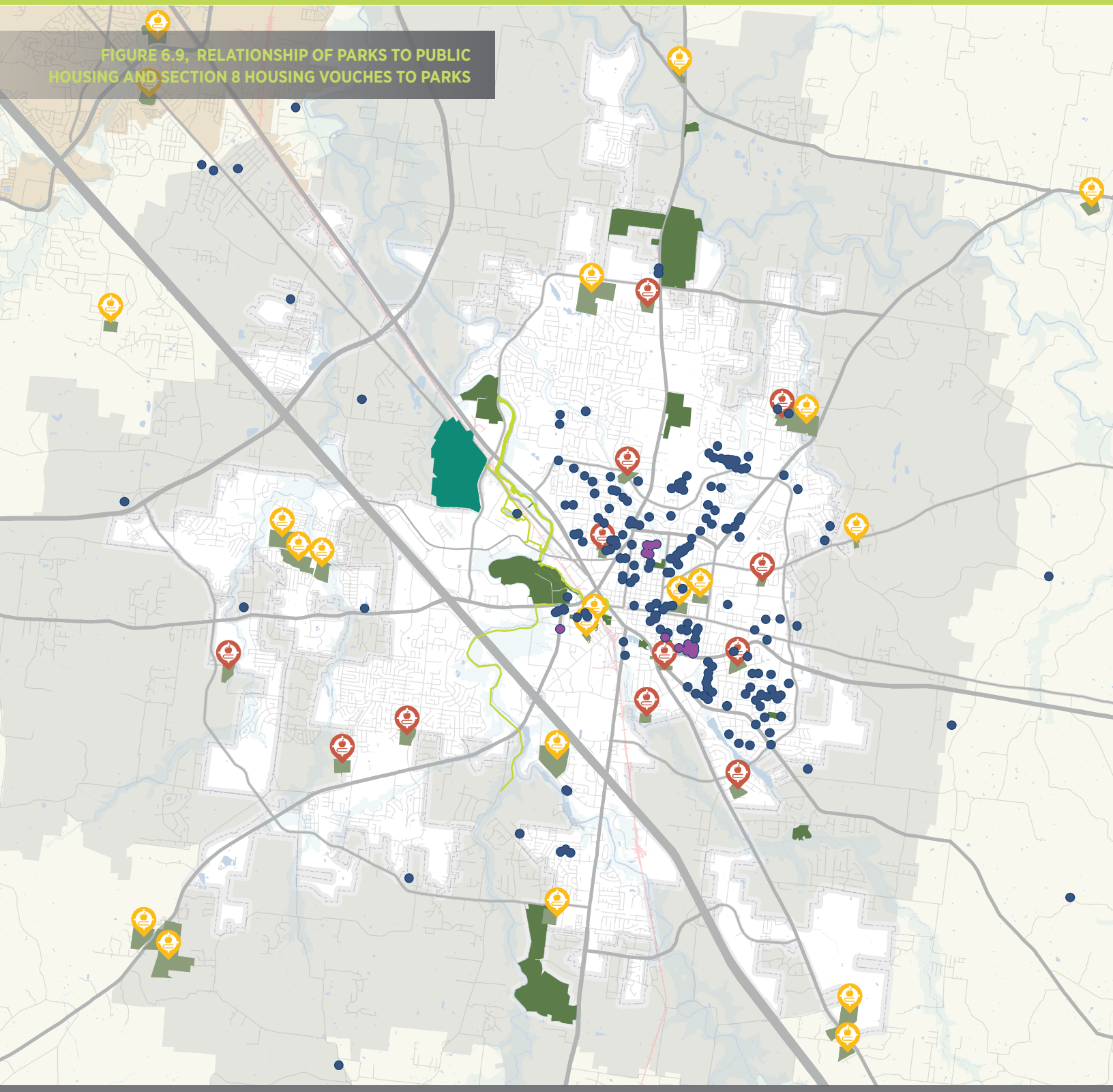
FIGURE 6.8, RELATIONSHIP OF ROVER ROUTES TO PARKS AND SCHOOL PARKS



GREENWAY
PARKS
SCHOOL PARKS
MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS (MCS)
RUTHERFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS (RCS)
STONES RIVER NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

ROVER ROUTES
MERCRURY
GATEWAY
OLD FORT
WESTSIDE LOOP
HIGHLAND
MEMORIAL_VA
S CHURCH

FIGURE 6.9, RELATIONSHIP OF PARKS TO PUBLIC HOUSING AND SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHES TO PARKS



GREENWAY
PARKS
SCHOOL PARKS
MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS (MCS)
RUTHERFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS (RCS)
STONES RIVER NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
SECTION 8 HOUSING VOUCHERS
PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS